

**A Thematic Appreciation in Wahome Mutahi's Doomsday
and The House of Doom**

**A project study Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the requirements of the
degree of Masters of Arts in the University of Nairobi.**

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DECLARATION

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

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This project has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors

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DEDICATION

To my late mother Dina Nyagoha Kiduyu
To my late father Thomas Kiduyu Angogo
Your love for education has brought me thus far.

To my husband Gad N. Munyaka
To my daughters Watiri and Nyagoha.
You are indeed my source of inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

The study is based on the belief that there is need for an academic critical analysis on Wahome Mutahi's ideas. It sets out to state and explain various issues of concern as they are portrayed in Doomsday and The House of Doom. The first chapter elucidates the main progress of the study. It gives a detailed literature review on what other scholars, book reviewers and even the public have said on the author and his works. The study adopts the stylistics, sociological and postcolonial theoretical frameworks. Specific principles and their applicability to the study are established. The methodology to be used within the study, scope and limitation are stated and elaborated on. Chapter two discusses the issue of disaster and society. HIV/AIDS and terrorism are the major disaster issues identified and discussed. Chapter three is concerned with how Kenyan euphemism is used to coat corruption. It discusses corruption as the instigating force behind terrorism and human suffering. In chapter four certain characters and situations are symbolized to bring out the themes of betrayal and hope. The conclusion summarizes the four chapters and raises an agenda for further studies.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Wahome Mutahi is a prolific writer. Certain factors in his life help to explain the preoccupations of his writings. As a former District Officer in Meru and Machakos districts of Eastern Province, Mutahi must have come face to face with cases of corruption. In his works he depicts Corruption as being inherent in those in power. Perhaps he resorted to the platform of writers and journalists so as to expose the experiences of civil servants. As a Sunday nation columnist and journalist Mutahi found the opportunity to remain alert to happenings and issues affecting the society. In the 'Whispers' column he criticised and commented on issues such as those of corruption, betrayal and political leadership. On detention without trial in 1986 he must have felt the pang of betrayal from a government he trusted and had worked for. He writes of the things he saw, heard and experienced such as the 1998 bomb attack on the American embassy in Nairobi and the scourge of HIV/AIDS. In an interview conducted by Wasike in his MA thesis Mutahi is reported to have said:

... the best way to have Kenyans to read even more is to publish books that are immediate to their environment, relevant to their experiences and easy to read.(27)

Mutahi's ideas are an elaboration on the ideas raised by preceding Kenyan creative writers. For instance, Francis Imbuga's Betrayal in the City depicts a disillusioned society as seen in Mosese's words: "It was better while we waited. Now we have nothing to look forward to. We have killed our past and are busy killing our

future.”(30-31) Yet, with the death of Mulili Imbuga manages to portray the idea of hope. Ngugi’s ‘Return’ that later emerged as A grain of Wheat explores the moment of Kenya’s independence and betrayal that developed during the struggle. J.Roger Kurtz in Urban Obsession Urban Fears: The Postcolonial Kenyan Novel observes:

A Grain of Wheat is the prototype for a later sub genre of the Kenyan novel that might be termed disillusionment literature, stories that reflect a widespread disappointment with the failed promises of independence (27).

Ngugi reveals both political and personal betrayals that result into a disillusioned and hopeless society. As Ngugi concludes his novel we experience a glimpse of hope in the shattered remnants of the relationship between Mumbi and Gikonyo. Mutahi in The House of Doom and Doomsday portrays a treacherous and a corrupt disillusioned society faced with the disastrous events of terrorism and HIV/AIDS. But just like Ngugi and Imbuga Mutahi’s works portray residues of a hopeful future.

Marjorie Oludhe in Coming to Birth is one Kenyan author who is quite optimistic about the birth of Kenya as a nation and especially the future of Kenyan women. Disillusionment is portrayed side by side with hope. This is a significant novel that foreshadows hopeful changes of a young nation. Wahome Mutahi’s works shows that the expectations of the society depend entirely in the change of attitudes towards one another, honesty, efficiency, unity and hard work.

Mutahi is the author of: Three Days on The Cross, The Jail Bug, Doomsday, The House of Doom, Father Camisassius, How To Be A Kenyan and The Miracle Merchant which he has co authored with Wahome Karengo. He has also written a number of plays although most of them are not published. The Sunday Nation column

“Whispers” which Wahome Mutahi began in 1982 and ran for two decades suddenly came to an end on March 7, 2003. Mutahi went for a surgery to remove a fat growth at the back of his neck and never woke up from the coma. On 22, July 2003 Wahome Mutahi became ‘past tense’ a euphemistic term he was fond of using in reference to death.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Wahome Mutahi has written many books. His first novel Three Days on the Cross is patently autobiographical though the first draft was written five years before he was detained for thirty days without charges. After his release he revised his manuscript and presumably added his experience in the basement of Nyayo house. The Jail Bugs deals with his subsequent imprisonment and exposes the jail conditions in Kenya. Doomsday narrates the August 7, 1998 bombing of the United States Embassy in Nairobi. The House of Doom depicts the Kenyan experience of HIV/AIDS victims. His book Father Camisassius is a comical account of his life with a Roman Catholic priest. He has co authored Dream Merchant with Wahome Karengo which depicts religious hypocrisy and drug trafficking.

In spite of these many titles, very limited study has been done on his works, yet criticism of a literary work enriches and highlights its social and aesthetic relevance. Since this has not been done, his works needs to be redressed. So far only Chris Wasike has analysed the use of satire in Three Days on the Cross and The Jail Bug.

Wahome Mutahi's ideas are quite contemporary for he writes from personal and group experience. Up till now the issues he portrays in his prose works are yet to

receive adequate academic critical attention. This study therefore seeks to state and explain Wahome Mutahi's ideas as portrayed in Doomsday and The House Doom.

OBJECTIVES

The study sets out to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To discuss the issue of disaster and society with specific reference to HIV/AIDS and terrorism.
- (ii) To explore the role of the Kenyan euphemisms in the portrayal of corruption.
- (iii) To state and present a critical analysis on symbolism in relation to the ideas of betrayal and hope.
- (iv) To explore how certain stylistic features enhance the depiction of the above-mentioned concerns.

HYPOTHESES

This study proceeds with the following assumptions:

- (i) The author portrays HIV/AIDS and terrorism as disaster phenomenon that are enhanced by a corrupt and a treacherous society.
- (ii) The author has purposely used Kenyan euphemisms to portray the theme of corruption.
- (iii) Mutahi's characters and their actions symbolizes betrayal and hope.
- (iv) A writer's success or achievement is clearly appreciated through a study of style.

JUSTIFICATION

This study is justified on the basis that Wahome Mutahi is a prolific writer whose works are yet to receive adequate critical academic attention. His novel Doomsday

portrays the issue of international terrorism on the society. Terrorism is a new experience in postcolonial Africa. This justifies the need to give it a literary critical attention. Mutahi's The House of Doom captures the experiences of HIV/AIDS on individuals and the society. These experiences of terrorism and HIV/AIDS are intertwined with the concepts of corruption and betrayal. The fact the issues portrayed are contemporary in nature justifies a critical analysis on them. In any case very few Kenyan authors feature the themes of terrorism and hope.

The study of the two novels together is justified by the presence of the word 'doom' in the titles of the two novels evidently missing in his other titles for example: Three Days on the Cross, Jail Bugs, and How to be a Kenyan. The bomb blast and the scourge of HIV AIDS are both disaster phenomenon and therefore these events help in comprehending the 'doom' facing the society.

Wahome Mutahi has co-authored The Miracle Merchant with Wahome Karengo and therefore the issues portrayed are shared views and as such it will not be considered in this study. Wahome Mutahi's plays are written in the Kikuyu language and most of them remain not translated, unpublished and not easily available. As such they will also not be part of this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study adopts the assistance of the stylistic approach. Edgar V Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs in Literature: An introduction to Reading and Writing define the word style as:

...derived from the Latin word 'stylus'(a writing instrument), is understood to mean the way in which writers assemble words to tell the story, develop the argument....consider style as the placement of words in the service of content. The way a thing is said, in other words, cannot be separated from the thing itself. (266)

Style is an integral part of the message of a text. As an evaluative domain style refers to the effectiveness of a mode of expression. It refers to literary language and is associated with literature as a characteristic of good, effective or beautiful writing. Even when the focus is on content its relation to words, sentences and structure results to a fruitful analysis. It is through use of style that a writer penetrates and reveals the inner form of his subject. David Crystal and Derek Davy in Investigating English Style state:

...the aim of stylistics is to analyse language habits with the main purpose of identifying from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; to explain, where possible, why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives; and classify these features into categories based upon a view of their function in the social context. By 'features' here, we mean any bit of speech or writing which a person can single out from the general flow of language and discuss a particular word, part of a word, a sequence or way of uttering a word (10-11).

Leech and Short in Style in Fiction concur with the above assertion when they state that the distinction between what a writer has to say, and how it is presented to the

reader, underlies one of the earliest and most persistent concepts of style as 'the dress of thought'. This study explore the use of certain features such as choice of diction, syntactical structures, symbolism, euphemism and imagery and evaluates how these devices enhance the presentations of the themes of disaster and society, corruption, betrayal and hope.

The elaboration on form creates an elaboration of meaning. The intended form cannot be divorced from the schematic relation between the ideas being presented. The choice of a third person pronoun, 'he/she/it' may be regarded as neutral in narration compared to the second and first persons. Yet the choice of the third person may have implications that are fruitfully examined in stylistics. This study explores how Mutahi's point of view help in saying what he has to say.

Dualism is an aspect well invested in prose. Dualism asserts that there are different ways of saying the same thing. It is the choice of style that makes a writer unique for man basically shares the concepts of love, betrayal, and corruption. It is, therefore, clear that Wahome Mutahi as an individual, a writer in the twenty first century and a Kenyan by birth and residence should write differently and say what other writers before him might have said in their own style.

The study is also informed by the postcolonial theory. Post-colonial is a word, which is used to refer to that which comes after colonialism. This meaning is restrictive in the sense that it implies only political independence and suggests that colonialism has completely ended. The term also refers to conditions that are said to prevail in the former colonies and the global condition of the relation between the West and the

rest. The post-colonial theory takes into account the continuing far-reaching effects of colonialism.

This study adopts the definition of post-colonial as the effects of colonization and the huge diversity of everyday hidden responses to it. Post colonialism attempts to describe our contemporary situation by focusing on the effects of western imperialism. The domination of a few Nations over others has not ceased-the military and economic influence of the United States being the most important example. The bomb blast attack portrayed in Wahome Mutahi's Doomsday is a result of America's poor relations with the East. Yet when Kenya becomes the victim of their hate for each other the Americans betray them as Dr Obwogo Subiri in The Bombs that shook Nairobi and Dar: A story of pain and betrayal observes:

The bombing of US Embassy in Nairobi on August 7, 1998, is a story of pain and betrayal. The pain of those who were injured and maimed.

Betrayal? Yes many Kenyans felt Americans betrayed them. From the marines who cordoned off the Embassy and stood guard, stone-faced and uncaring of what was going on.... (viii)

Issues arising from the immediate aftermath of the bombings undoubtedly raised queries about United States policy for Africa. Tensions flared and accusations of racism were levelled at the behaviour of US marines...(13)

Lack of genuine concern is not all that the poor African countries face in the neo colonial era. Poor governance, inefficiency, materialism, loses of the cultural base that regulated society morals are just but some of the effects of colonialism, all evident in Wahome Mutahi's novels. This study adopts this theory and shows the

effects of inheriting an oppressive economic order. Questions of racism, superior and inferiority complexes, which emerged during colonialism, continue to affect the previously colonized nations. Within Africa the past decades has witnessed the continent as a site for the production of national bourgeoisies as agents in local and regional wars. Imperialism has penetrated far more deeply into national economies than was the case in earlier decades. More significantly the elite have achieved a far greater level of capital accumulation and have therefore developed a contradictory attitude towards their own Nation state. Africa is mired in a secular decline of its economic systems and infrastructural facilities such as an increase in the decay of road works, poor transport facilities, lack of social fabrics, terrorism threats, insecurity, epidemics and ethnic genocide. Beside all these, acts of betrayal and corruption persist.

The study also adopts the sociological approach to literary criticism as one of its analytical theoretical framework. The sociological approach argues that literature is both a product and a force in the society. It is a product because it is an expression of the society's experience and because the writer himself is a member of the same society and its experience is the raw material from which literature is created. This study looks at how Wahome Mutahi derives his raw material from the society he lives in. The sociological framework argues that it is wrong for critics to talk about literature without the recognition of its social environment and even the historical period of its production. It illuminates the fact that there is no critic who can understand the novel by turning his back on society especially within the novel.

Lukacs gives a classical definition of the function of the novel. He says the novel's manner of portrayal is closer to life. It represents a limited section of reality and aims at evoking the totality of the process of social development. He says society is the principle subject of the novel, that is, man's social life in his ceaseless interaction with the surrounding nature, which forms the basis of social activity and with different social institutions of customs that mediates the relations between individuals in social life. This concept is used in the argument on the contemporary nature of Mutahi's ideas.

The sociological framework stresses on an artist who contributes sensitively to the world around him with an accuracy of perception and presentation, for such an artist creates works of art, which becomes a source of inspiration. It is this argument that proliferates the study of Wahome Mutahi's social vision.

Ngugi, one of the proponents of the sociological theory talks of the need to examine the writers' honesty and faithfulness in capturing and reflecting the struggles around him, his attitude to those big social and political issues and the attitudes and world view embodied in his work and with which he is persuading us to identify with. In Writers in Politics in an essay entitled *Literature and Society* he says:

Literature results from conscious acts of men in society. At the level of the individual artist, the very act of writing implies a social relationship; one is writing about somebody for somebody. At the collective level, literature, as a product of men's intellectual and imaginative activities, embodies in words and images, the tensions, conflicts, contradictions at the heart of a community being and process of becoming. It is a reflection at the aesthetic and

imaginative plane, of a community's wrestling with its total environment to produce the basic means of life, food, clothing, shelter, and in the process creating and recreating itself in history (5-6).

Wahome Mutahi's works reflect the society's attitude to every day happenings. The study explains the society's encounter with an oppressive socio-economic system that has led to a corrupt and violent society. There is the greed for material possessions, which has resulted into corruption and other vices such as betrayal, prostitution and terrorism. Emmanuel Ngara in Ideology and Form in African Poetry acknowledges the need to give expression to the real conditions of human existence and struggles that have a historical basis. Wahome Mutahi's novels are set on real political and social happening in Kenya and these events set in motion the issues under discussion. Armah Kwei in a public lecture held in Feb 17, 2005 at the University of Nairobi said literature is a reflection of society on the society; it is a means to enhance the society to think about itself. Lack of a historical perspective to it is indeed lack of knowledge.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This book review starts off by an exploration of the creative and critical works covering the issue of HIV/AIDS. The works are stated and those that have received a critical attention are elaborated on. It then progresses from the general comments on Mutahi as a Sunday Nation newspaper columnist 'Whispers' articles to a playwright, and finally as a novelist. A review on aspects of style then follows.

The theme of HIV/AIDS is a concern many Kenyan novelists respond to. Joseph Situma's The Mysterious Killer, Macharia Mwangi's Reversed Dreams, Marjorie

Oludhe's Chira and Meja Mwangi's The Last Plague are all concerned with the scourge of HIV/AIDS. In her MA thesis, Maurine Nekesa Ndumba tackles the theme of HIV/AIDS. She analyses the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS and its impacts on men and women in Meja Mwangi's The Last Plague. In her first chapter she treats HIV/AIDS as a disaster phenomenon that has ruined the inhabitants of Crossroads village. She says:

The term crossroads signifies dilemma. To be at crossroads is to be lost, it is a situation whereby one has to make a sensible choice. As the name of the village suggests, the members of Crossroads village are in turmoil. HIV/AIDS has hit the village and people no longer talk about it in whispers, yet they are unwilling to seek guidance... . The villagers are scared of the scourge, which is killing most of their young adults and leaving the village bare. (32)

Ndumba's analysis is based on Mwangi's rural setting. Ndumba also looks at the culture conflict of wife inheritance and circumcision. The experiences portray a society living together in a village called Crossroads. In Mutahi's novel we discuss HIV/AIDS in an urban environment and therefore experience the individualism and the city loneliness that HIV/AIDS victims encounter. The House of Doom and the owner Mbela contrast with the many people dying everyday at Crossroads village.

Wasamba has also analysed the issue of the Aids Scourge in Macgoye's Chira in his PhD thesis on " Gender Perspectives in the Creative works of Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye." Wasamba says:

In this novel Macgoye suggests that the dreaded disease is spread by traditional beliefs and practices, which misrepresent the pathology of Aids as

a common wasting disease known among the Lou as chira. Chira is believed to be a punishment from the ancestors for not complying with norms.” (127)

Wasamba analyses the experiences of HIV/AIDS victims as portrayed by Macgoye. These are the emaciated physical appearances, abandonment, psychological torture and stigmatisation. He then analyses the different ways of dealing with the scourge such as the need to fight it collectively, to be compassionate, to talk about it, to use condom, screen individuals before marriage and even discusses Macgoye’s proposal for cohabitation. This study will discuss some of these ideas as portrayed by Wahome Mutahi but will also go a step further and discuss the issues of betrayal and hope in relation to the HIV/AIDS scourge.

Through his Whispers column Wahome Mutahi was able to reach many Kenyans of different social status. During Mutahi’s burial, president Mwai Kibaki, in a message read by Balala, describes him as a great artist who fought for democracy. He said Mutahi’s selflessness inspired desire among Kenyans who looked forward to his humour column, Whispers. This is just but one of the many attributes accorded to Wahome Mutahi at the time of his demise. In this brief comment we are able to identify Wahome as a humourist, an aspect of style that is easily identifiable in his works.

Judy Wanjiku Wanderi in Artmatters says:

Through humour, Mutahi attracted a large audience his clever wit hitting hard against corruption and injustice. His mastery of political satire entertained Kenyans as well as enlightened them on their environment (Internet).

Wahome Mutahi satirizes the society without offending its social sensibilities. His works entertain, inform and educate the society. Wanderi adds that Mutahi reflected on the daily life of the ordinary citizen and wrote of the things that Kenyans were afraid to say in the open and only spoke of in whispers. Kwamchetsi Makhokha is of the same opinion with Wanderi when he says:

He took mundane situations and turned them into poignant moments deserving of reflections. He was keen on the events making news everyday and his pen was always on the pulse of his readers. (Internet)

This study explores how the author is influenced by societal experiences in the portrayal of the themes of disaster and society, corruption, betrayal and hope. Wahome's novels do not reflect literature as belonging to some odd world. He borrows from real life experience such as the happening of the bomb blast in Nairobi and the plight of HIV/AIDS victims. The social, political and economic conditions of the people are explored. .

On his style of writing Kwanchetsi Makhokha says:

His writing was like an onion whose layers one could keep peeling for tears and laughter. There were those who could read it for the humour on the surface and those who would peel the first layer and weep a little that their consciences were becoming calloused. At the core, there was a deep understanding of the culture and life of the people that whispers wrote for and about (Internet).

To use Makhokha's words this study delves deep 'peel the layers' in Doomsday and The House of Doom so as to bring to comprehension Mutahi's ideas. It adopts the socio-stylistic approach and the postcolonial theory so as to understand the issues of terrorism, HIV/AIDS, corruption, betrayal and hope. The influence of the western ideology and their continuing domineering aspects are explained.

George Odera Outa PhD thesis 'Performing Power in African Postcolony: Drama and Theatre in Modern Kenya' analyses Wahome Mutahi's plays. He points out the fact that in this works the writer condemns political corruption, hypocrisy, betrayal and tyranny in Kenya. He says the plays prick the conscience of those in power. He points out the contemporary nature of the plays for example 'Igoti ria muigi' (people's court) is about justice meted out by hoi polloi. In this thesis Outa gives a detailed study on the play ' Jomo Kenyatta' where the themes of betrayal, tribal clashes and land grabbing are discussed. The question arises on how he manages to penetrate this works, which as already mentioned, are not easily available and at the same time are written in the Kikuyu language. This study majors on Wahome Mutahi's novels and therefore his plays will not be part of this discourse.

Wahome Mutahi's book How to be A Kenyan is a collection of humorous anecdotes that reflect the true identity of Kenyans. Daudi Kahura says this text is but a mirror in our eyes by which we can see who we are and how we behave.

Just Wawira's review on The Jail Bugs appreciates the contemporary setting of the novel. He says the texts facsimile the jail conditions in Kenya. Kurtz thinks that:

The most successful appropriation of the popular novel to transmit a serious message comes from Wahome Mutahi, whose two novels rely on satirical humour to tell the grizzly tale of the treatment, meted out to Kenyan political dissidents. (60)

.... Mutahi's unique trait in Three Days on the Cross is his ability to tell a story of absolute corruption, with a heavy dose of irony and humour. (61)

This study will discuss how Wahome uses real situations or events in the novels Doomsday and The House of Doom to portray his ideas.

Chris Wasike has conducted a study on Wahome Mutahi's first two novels. In his MA thesis 2002 he analyses the use of satire in Three Days on the Cross and The Jail Bugs. He shows how various stylistic devices are used to develop satire in the two novels. He says:

In a nutshell, flashbacks, flash-forwards, retrospection and stream of consciousness have been used to create a discrepancy between the reality as it is and what is assumed to be. This discrepancy creates a sense of irony and the ridiculous. In the process, the author has ended up poking fun, not only at the world of the novel, but also at the world in general. He has thus deliberately used these narrative techniques to foreground irony and therefore attacks the wickedness and hypocrisy that the characters indulge in. (46-47)

Wasike further points out how ridicule is achieved through special linguistic and stylistic choices. "... the language used dictates the style in a novel and conversely, the style adopted (satirical in this case) dictates the choice of words to be used." (47)

Characterization, themes, use of sordid imagery and buffoonery are all seen in the light of satire. He says:

The use of images of filth, vulgarity and animality is generally consistent with the nature of satire because man always tends towards the bestial instincts in all his follies. It is not surprising to note that the scene of satire is always clogged up` disorderly crowded and packed to the brink-almost bursting. (77)

It is worth noting that Chris Wasike is purely concerned with Wahome` s use of satire in the two novels and how other stylistic features enhance its presence. This study differs in the sense that it is more interested in content than it is in style. The major concern is not to study style, but rather to show how style is used to express the themes of disaster and society, corruption, betrayal and hope in Doomsday and The House Doom.

James Shimanyula, Africawide Network`s chief editor describes The House of Doom as ` a masterpiece`. He says it is an insightful and humour laced suspense novel by a gifted writer. In addition he says:

Mr Mutahi interposes narration with poetic sentences and humorous accounts that make it fast reading. The novel is tinted with rich stylistic devices.

Themes include prostitution, greed and betrayal (Internet).

This study advances on the stated observation, but specifically considers the issues of HIV/AIDS, terrorism, betrayal, corruption and hope and how the author uses the `rich stylistic devices` to communicate these concepts. Wahome Mutahi employs the use of

symbolism, allusion, figures of speech, narrative techniques, realism, satire and irony, use of letter and euphemisms to portray his ideas. Indangasi in Stylistics says:

We need to point out that in literary works, as in other products of the human mind, form and content are opposites that interpenetrate. They exist as separate entities that form a unity. (5)

Roland Bartel in Metaphors and Symbols Forays into Languages, define symbols as figurative expressions that transcend literal language. In stories a symbol is usually a person, an object, a place, an action, a group or a situation. They rely on implication and suggestion. The abstract is presented in concrete terms and can be interpreted with varying degrees of openness and specificity. He says that any word or incident that calls attention to itself, anything unexpected, whatever seems particularly effective, should be looked at for symbolic implications. He adds that the words 'signs' and 'symbols' are often used interchangeably and the most important signs in our life are words. This study explores Wahome Mutahi's choice of words especially in his titles and explains how his selection of words extends his thoughts and feeling in the texts. Symbolism is elevated through repetition, allusion and connotation.

Other features of style used by Wahome are figures of speech. Figures of speech realized in similes and metaphors tend to see the similarities in the dissimilar. They are therefore semantically open and indeterminate. A simile is a direct comparison with the use of the words 'as' and 'like' while a metaphor is an indirect comparison. Figures of speech have pre-existing semantic comparative characteristics.

A. F. Scott in Current Literary Terms describes satire as the holding up of vice or folly to ridicule. The motive of satire is amendments, its province morals and manners, its method accentuation and its audience the self-satisfied. It is a mask, under which the truths are hidden. It is an indirect device for communicating the hidden truths. Satire makes use of irony and sarcasm. Irony refers to language and situations that are inappropriate or opposite from normal expectation. Situational irony refers to circumstances in which punishments do not fit crimes, or in which rewards are not earned. Dramatic irony is whereby a character may perceive his or her situation in a limited way while readers and other characters see things in a more broad way. Verbal irony applies to language, what is meant is distinct from what is said. This study shows how the above forms of irony advance the satirical portrayal of the themes of corruption and betrayal.

Indangasi in *Stylistics* explains different aspects of prose style. He says that an important feature of the prose style is point of view. Point of view is the angle of vision, or the position from which the story is told. This study will elucidate how Wahome uses the omniscient point of view to portray his ideas.

In the same text Indangasi discusses realism as another important aspect of prose style: 'from the standpoint of style, realism means writing in such a manner as to create an illusion of reality, which tries to imitate the language of conversation.' (117) He identifies dialogue, dialect and idiolect as strategies of realism in prose literary works. Stream of consciousness or interior monologue is also an aspect of realism as the characters thoughts are said to 'flow' naturally and spontaneously. This study

explains the functions of these features in advancing the image mirrored on the issues of HIV/AIDS, terrorism, corruption, betrayal and hope.

From this literature review it can be seen that Wahome Mutahi has received very little academic attention. Apart from Chris Wasike who has done a critical study on his two novels, the others either review his novels or just comment on his skills and ability as a writer. It is quite obvious that his novels Doomsday and The House of Doom have not received any critical attention.

METHODOLOGY

The study has mainly been based on Library research for pertinent support material on style, the postcolonial and the sociological theories. Wahome Mutahi's other works and the critical discourse on them were also read and used for textual evidence where necessary. Internet facilities were used to download relevant material, which was used for textual verification. Since the study involves two texts a comparative study was adopted.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study limits itself to an appreciation of terrorism, HIV/AIDS, corruption, betrayal and hope in Wahome Mutahi's novels Doomsday and The House of Doom. His other works are referred to only when necessary and in relation to the ideas under discussion. An assessment on the author's vision is discussed in relation to the theme of hope. A stylistic approach, the sociological and the postcolonial theories are used to facilitate the discourse on the mentioned issues.

CHAPTER TWO

DISASTER AND SOCIETY

The House of Doom and Doomsday expose the society's struggles in managing calamity. The word 'house' stands for 'place'. Literally it refers to the building where Mbela the HIV/AIDS victim lives yet it could also symbolize geographical entities, which in both novels are Third World countries and the city. Kurtz observes:

A comprehensive overview of the Kenyan novel reveals that the city has fired the postcolonial literary imagination in a way that no other single symbol or idea has. (155)

Kurtz singles out the city as the place where Kenyan novelist regularly projects both the obsessions and the fears of their society. Creative writers who reflect urban social order in their works portray the city as the symbol of disaster in the society. Kiribiti city in Doomsday features terrorism while Roinabi city in The House of Doom portrays the HIV/AIDS scourge. The causes and ultimate effects of these disasters on the individual and the entire society are revealed. The city is important because of its role as the major site for the basic conflicts and contradiction in contemporary African society. It represents the Western imported forms such as materialism, sexual perversion, corruption and betrayal. The novels feature the city as the site of betrayal and disillusionment.

From a literal point of view the word 'day' in Doomsday suggests the specific day the American embassy in the fictitious country Anyisa is bombed. On the other hand, the word 'day' refers to a period of time. It could also imply the contemporary nature of the works and their postcolonial features. Many nations are concerned and worried of the modern world we are living in where both local and international threats of

terrorism have increased. It is also a time when many people all over the world and especially in Third World countries are dying of HIV/AIDS. The use of the word 'doom' in both titles creates a relation of time and space. The titles The House of Doom and Doomsday symbolize the harsh or hard times Third World countries are experiencing.

It can be assumed that whatever is repeated must be significant. Wahome Mutahi's choice of the word 'doom' in the two novels is not by mistake. It is deliberately done so as to show ill omen. Macmillan English Dictionary defines the word doom as; a bad event, usually death that will happen in the future and cannot be avoided or a feeling that a situation is very bad and without hope. The use of the word 'doom' therefore reveals the fact that Mutahi writes about disillusionment. Novels of this kind portray the injustices and inequalities that have persisted since independence. They highlight the harsh inequalities of modern capitalism, political and economic corruption, police harassments and the breakdown of the moral fabric of the society. In the two novels the society is disillusioned as a result of HIV/AIDS and terrorism.

Disillusionment is also portrayed in Mutahi's other novels. Three Days on the Cross features the torture of Chipota and Momodu by the police in the dark and hidden chambers in the basement of a building situated in the city centre. The Jail Bugs is a story that portrays deploring prison conditions in Kenya. Both novels reveal a system that subjects human beings to treatments and conditions that are dehumanising. It is a corrupt and treacherous system that inherits power and the vice that accompanies it from the colonial government and this becomes a major cause to the disaster facing the society. Mutahi's Doomsday and The House of Doom show a decadent society

inhibited by corruption and betrayal. The novels portray tragedy and a general situation of hopelessness.

Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines the word 'Doomsday' as the end of the world. The narrator tells us how traffic comes to a standstill after the first blast. Traffic coming to a standstill symbolizes life coming to a stop. When the news of the blast spread, a man from the Coast by the name Mayeka exclaims, "La! La, Laai! This world has come to an end! It is finished! Completely..."(186). What this means is that the bomb blast ruin is irreversible, sudden and of lasting disastrous effects. The end of the world is associated with total destruction and uncertainty. The title 'Doomsday' explains the unpredictability of the times we are living in. With the increase in illegal trade in firearms and acts of corruption human beings are bound to destroy themselves through wars and terrorists attacks as Mutahi portrays in Doomsday.

Mutahi dedicates Doomsday:

To all those men, women, boys and girls
who lost their lives, were injured
and maimed in the
Wanton and cowardly act of
August 7, 1998, in Nairobi.

Doomsday is an account of unjustifiable terrorists attack on the American embassy in Kenya, Nairobi. To make the story fictitious Wahome avoids the use of Kenya and Nairobi. In The House of Doom he coins the name of the city from Nairobi to

Roinabi and Kenya to Nyak. In Doomsday the fictitious country is Anyisa and the city Kiribiti. These fictitious names universalise the experiences of terrorism and of HIV/AIDS victims. What it means is that what happens on this day and place can happen anywhere else in the world, at any time and to anybody irrespective of age, gender and even race. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is not a disease affecting one race or nation; it is a concern for the whole human race of men and women, the young and the old.

The society and the family that raises Ismail are responsible for the disaster of the bomb blast. They are responsible for indoctrinating his mind. Ismail is brought up to believe that America is their greatest enemy:

He ..learned that the greatest enemy of 'our great leader' was a Satan called America. It was the greatest Satan on earth....who was also an enemy of Islam. It was a topic that always came up whenever Ismail's father met other people.

....he had no other dream than to fight the Satan.... who was an ally of Israel which had denied Palestinians their land and political rights. He had learnt that the Zionists would have been wiped out of the face of the earth if the Big Satan had not sheltered Israel under its wings. (33-34)

Ismail's experience can be compared to the parents who teach their children to keep off Mbela in The House of Doom. Ismail grows up with one wish to fight their enemy and even feels his fellow Arabs had failed in fighting the 'Big Satan'. America as a Supper power is a source of envy, fear and hate especially in the Arab world. Ismail opts to protect those on his territory and elsewhere in the world. It is ironical that

instead of protecting them he ends up destroying them in the bomb attack. In this act we are able to see the relationship of America with the rest of the world. We encounter the political reality of the East-West Super Power conflict.

Africa is portrayed as a victim of their conflict. Ismail is sent to Zambuka by Saddam to help the Muslim government in fighting the Christian rebels. Anyisa allies with America and provides a sea base from where:

“The united States had launched a missile attack on Zambuka, destroying what it described as a chemical warfare plant meant to produce chemical weapons to fight pro-America states in Africa.”(36)

Saddam’s aim is to defeat America at whatever cost: “...punish the Americans and what he called its lackeys in this act.”(36) Anyisans suffer the bomb attack because of the hatred Saddam has for Americans. The success of the bomb blast in Anyisa is significant to the Iraq government. Malik says:

“What happened in Anyisa two hours ago marks a landmark in our struggle to liberate the world from the demonic grip of America.... our leader is greatly pleased and may Allah be praised for giving him strength to face the aggression from the Americans.” (189)

The use of the word landmark in Doomsday is used to refer to the impact of terrorism on the society. Mutahi’s use of the word landmark in reference to both HIV/AIDS and terrorism corresponds with the use of the word ‘doom’ in the two novels. This shows the similar disastrous effects terrorism and HIV/AIDS have on the society. However, the use of the word landmark in reference to terrorism is meant to be

positive as it is supposed to show the success of the act. This explains the sadism and hate that accompanies acts of terrorism.

Mutahi makes it clear that neither the East nor the West is really concerned about Africa. The bomb attack on the American embassy shows that Africa is being used as the ground of their battlefield. A good example to illustrate this point is when after the bomb blast, a meeting is held in Iraq and it is decided that they should withdraw their military support from Zambuka as their interests had been fulfilled in the bombing of Anyisa. Khaled says: "Our resources should now support causes that will support our own." (191) Another example to explain further the point above is when during the security meeting at the American embassy Wright says:

"We are not particularly popular in some parts of this continent specifically because of our support for shall I say, unpopular governments which nevertheless are our friends for strategic reasons." (77)

Wright's words become significant when after the bomb blast the Americans betray the Anyisians by refusing to join the rescue teams in the adjacent building. They insist on taking care of their interests first before attending to anybody else. Wright's words and the marines' action portray the Americans negative attitude towards Africa. Both Anyisa and Zambuka are portrayed as victims of American's hypocrisy.

The East and the West take advantage of the continent's Political instability, unfulfilled dreams and the emergence of resistance movements to fulfil their own interests. For instance the Wasimba sect is a political resistance movement that passes as a Christian religious sect. They claim that those who took leadership from the colonial powers had betrayed those who fought for independence. This group

becomes vulnerable to the likes of Lukulo who aspires to be the country's president. Lukulo's ambition for power and wealth in turn makes him vulnerable to Ismail and the Iraq government who promise to support him and the Anyisa Liberation Army (ALA). This is evident in Ismail's blatant lie: "The success of our mission will be the success of your revolution. It will be the success of Zambukans who like you have suffered because of American Imperialism."(64) Lukulo and the Wasimba sect are therefore used as tools in a war of assertion and vengeance.

Mutahi satirizes the insecurity in Africa that makes it easy for the bomber. Ismail is confident of his success in Africa because he is aware that internal security is weak and it is easy to compromise those in authority. The American embassy is right in the middle of Kiribiti city and the Americans citizens are complacent in this position:

The two marines and most of the Americans in the embassy considered working in the country a blessing. Kiribiti was not Beirut or any other Arab city where Americans were unsafe. The location of US embassy right in the city center was testimony of the confidence the Americans had in the security in the country. (20)

It is ironical that the city they trust should become the target of terrorists attack. The 'blessing' turns into a misfortune or a curse. It reflects the false security enjoyed by many nations of the world. This security can crumble at any time. Mutahi makes Ismail comment on the laxity of security by saying that had it been in Iraq they would have been caught. Lukulo's reply is: 'This is Africa, man. The land of opportunities.'(38) Ironically Lukulo does not realize that he is creating the chance for his own death. It is a land of opportunities for destruction and war as the East fights the West and vice versa not because of development.

Mutahi does not completely blame the poor relations the Arab world has with the Americans for the terrorism disaster on this day. He points an accusing finger at the participation of some of the Anyisan citizens who make it easy for the bomber's mission. In spite the fact that Mwakwaru and Iganji know that their future and that of their country Anyisa depend on the crate that they are transporting from the Coast to Roinabi city they happily carry on with the assignment. The security officers right from the top officials to the gate men are interested in the material gain. Thus, the author portrays a corrupt and a materialistic society as cause of disaster in Third World countries.

The individuals who participate in the terrorist act and betray their own fellow countrymen ironically do not live to enjoy the money they had earned. On the morning of the bomb blast Ismail poisons his collaborators Lukulo, Kibena and Njoro. He then shoots Olwe and sets the bomb to explode fifteen minutes earlier than the planned time he had told Iganji and Makwaru. The bomb explodes as they are being ordered out of the vehicle: "... the ground shook as the loudest bang ever heard in Anyisa boomed like a thousand tropical thunder claps." (149) The remains of Hardrock, Beckerman, Makwaru, and Iganji are seen flying high and low in all directions

The simile 'like a thousand thunder tropical claps' shows the ominous act. This is enhanced by the use of the onomatopoeic words 'bang' and 'boomed'. It is ironical that the planners of the disaster that the society encounters become its first victims. The author seems to imply that whatever one plans for others can also be done to him

or her. He warns the society to be cautious of falling prey to easy money. From another perspective their deaths shows that man creates his own destiny.

Anticipation for trouble at the American embassy starts the minute the camera captures Makwaru looking directly at it. The fear that Mbela experiences on being told he suffers from a mysterious disease is the same experienced by the security men-Putman and Berkely when they note: "The face of a man ..and for a fleeting moment he seemed to have come into eyeball contact with the camera's eyes." (21) On subsequent days Makwaru surveys the American embassy in pretence of wanting an American visa. Fear is increased by the repetitive presence of an Arab looking man within the environment of the American embassy. Claire says:

" It is the same face in the other video. Non-African, almost certainly of Arabic stock with a moustache and seated at the same position. Hardly a coincidence. The man must have been keeping watch on the embassy." (74)

The effects of Terrorism attack are disastrous and irreparable on the society. This is why there is a lot of fear from both the bomber and the target. Makwaru's dream is symbolic of the fear he is experiencing. The 'single engine plane' shows the weakness of the plan he is involved in. It forecasts Ismail's treachery. He dreams how he was high up in the cloud and then he suddenly realizes that he did not have any idea about piloting. This shows Makwaru's ignorance and lack of experience. The dream symbolizes and foreshadows an imminent disaster. Makwaru foresees his own death for he sees himself: 'diving heading for a volcano.' The dream is his conscious for he is engaged in an act of betrayal to his fellow countrymen and

motherland. The dream brings him face to face with the reality of the situation. The dream therefore becomes his voice of conscious.

The simile 'like an open sore' shows the amount of blood to be shed and the danger and viciousness of the operation. It foreshadows the injuries that are to occur as a result of this operation. This is enhanced by the metaphorical phrases of fire such as: 'vomiting blue and yellow flames' and 'the howling of flames'. A sense of danger is evidently clear in these phrases. Note that fire is a symbol of the last days or hell. The image of fire shows that terrorism attacks can completely destroy the whole world. The metaphors and the dream in general explain the psychological torture Makwaru must be experiencing.

The immediate effects of the bomb attack are explosions, death, injuries and fire: "... a flash of flames was leaking from a window in the ground floor of American embassy its tongues darting out as if it was teasing those outside." (150) The image of the 'tongue darting out' prepares us for the destruction that follows. Buses explode, cars burn, walls of certain buildings such as the powerhouse give in and people get injured:

When the bleeding people who had escaped from the two buildings mixed with those who had been injured in the streets, the sight was one of a massacre that did not distinguish man from a woman and a child from an adult. No one had started to count the bodies that lay near the two buildings. (154)

The ruin does not worry Ismail. He is happy with the havoc he causes the Anyisans:

He did not care that they cursed him. They were curses that recognized his power. He did not care that he caused the wailing down there. Their wails recognized his power. The wailing ambulances had blown an anthem to his power. (5)

The parallelism in the syntactical structures explains the selfishness, the sadism and the destructive nature of the bomber. The repetitions of the words 'curses' and 'wail' elaborate the idea of disaster. It is paradoxical that the suffering of the people is Ismail's success for the narrator says the wailing ambulances had blown an anthem to his power. An anthem is a special song for a special occasion. It is therefore a special time for Ismail because his wishes have been realized. The personification of the ambulance when it is described as 'wailing' creates a melancholic mood that help in highlighting Mutahi's portrayal of the disaster of terrorism on the society.

The bomb blast operation is named Khat (miraa). Khat is a drug known to intoxicate the user but at the same time keeps him alert. Like many other drugs it has lasting destructive effects to those who use it. When the operation acquires this name it symbolizes the negative effects of the bomb blast on the society. In spite of its destructive nature the society is awoken to the unpredictability of the times they are living in albeit too late.

Terrorism is not the only disaster facing the society. In The House of Doom Mbela's promiscuous life is 'rewarded' with the HIV/AIDS infection. In a stream of consciousness Mbela reflects the kind of life he has lived:

Mbela's mind was as busy as a bee. It flashed back to the days when he had relationship with several young and middle-aged women. ...There was

Atieno, the teacher; Beth, the health minister's daughter; Pauline, the preacher; Hanjila, the lawyer; Peris, the police corporal; Indira, the demographer; Maggie, the golfer and Damarin, the nightclub dancer. (16)

Mbela gets mixed up with women of various social positions and roles in the society. This reveals a sexual morally decadent society. It is a society where disaster is imminent. It is looming because there is sexual immorality. Mbela wonders which of these women had infected him. He is so confused as none of the women he has had sexual relations with had died. The conflict in Mbela's subconscious spreads to the society. He feels that the women he had moved with have brought great suffering to him: "Mbela cursed Eve for giving Adam the forbidden fruit. He thought that whoever gave him the virus was not different from Eve." (65) He even develops hatred for women as we see in the allusion to Eve. Mbela's hatred for women emanate from the fact that he is HIV/AIDS positive. Mbela refuses to accept the fact that he is entirely responsible for his own condition. The result of Mbela's acceptance to be involved with these women can symbolically be compared to what Adam experiences after he betrays the confidence God had in him. Like Adam Mbela is cut off from the society by isolation and rejection.

Mbela visits various doctors and they all tell him he is suffering from a mysterious disease. His first reaction is fear: 'The word mysterious filled Mbela with fear'. (9) The word 'mysterious' heightens fear and speculation. The fact that the doctors are reluctant to mention the condition affecting Mbela's health explains the fear that surrounds the scourge of HIV/AIDS. The society is gripped with fear since no cure for the disease has been discovered. All they can predict is imminent death for its

victims thus the use of the word 'doom'. All doctors refer Mbela to Hilltop Hospital, the only hospital where facilities for diagnosing HIV/AIDS patients are available. 'The mention of Hilltop Hospital increased Mbela's fears. The fears spun him around.' (12) Hope for extension of life lessens to those who are diagnosed HIV/AIDS positive. Mbela takes time to believe that he is actually suffering from some unknown mysterious disease: 'He kept hoping that like an astrologer predicting doom instead of boon, he had misread the signs.' (11)

Mbela's residential house from then comes to be known as the house of doom by his neighbours: "On the city Council's housing plan, it was House Number CCW666W13 in Mbembe Housing Estate." (35) Bartel says that certain numbers serve as symbols, particularly numbers with well-known associations with the Bible, in mythology and in folklore. The number given to the house alludes to the Bible: "Here is Wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666." (Rev 13:18)

The number 666 is associated with the anti-Christ, the beast. When the author gives Mbela's house this number he compares him to some inhuman force. The fact that the number 666 signifies the anti-Christ also shows that the author intends to describe Mbela as one who has lived a non-virtuous or unholy life. HIV/AIDS is associated with promiscuity, but this is not entirely true. The young innocent girl, Jenifa, acquires the virus as a result of blood transfusion. Dr Nzomo thinks that Mbela and even Jenifa might have acquired the virus as a result of the negligence of the medical staff that attends to them. The author is therefore suggesting that the society should

not condemn HIV/AIDS victims, for there are many ways of acquiring the virus and any one can get it.

The number 13 in Roman times was associated with ill omen, particularly that bringing death and destruction. For Christians the number thirteen also brought bad luck. The superstition stems from the Last supper where Judas Iscariot became the thirteenth guest to sit at the table and later betrayed Jesus. Norse Mythology also has a superstition surrounding thirteen at a dinner table and bad luck that ensues. Still, to this day, the superstition lives on. Most hotel chains have no room number thirteen and many skyscrapers are without a thirteenth floor. Friday the thirteenth is an unlucky day in much of Western Europe, North America, and Australia. Many people avoid travel and signing contracts on this day.

The synonymous use of 666 and 13 emphasizes the society's negative attitude towards victims of HIV/AIDS. The numbers also indicate why the HIV/AIDS victims suffer isolation, for the disease is associated with curses and demonic powers. The fact that the number thirteen is associated with bad luck shows that Mbela is just a victim of circumstances for he lives in a house already marked for doom. If we go back to our concept of the house as place then we can say Third World countries are just but victims of colonialism and its aftermaths. The effects of colonialism are realized in low moral standards of individuals and the society. This low moral behaviour contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDS. When the author alludes to these foreign numbers it shows how he is influenced by the Western concept of evil. It is a reflection of the effects of colonization on the African mind and the subliminal. When Mutahi resorts to the Western symbols it shows how alienated he is from his

African background. It also explains that his major concern is to portray HIV/AIDS in a postcolonial city that is not bound to any specific African culture.

Mbela's physical conditions deteriorate to the extent that he perceives his reflection in a mirror as: "a ghost that looked familiar." (9) This self-pity in Mbela destroys his personality and spiritually alienates him. The image of a ghost gives us the picture of a person who no longer has life in him. This description explains the physical deterioration of HIV/AIDS patients. Those healthy within the society are afraid to come in contact with the infected for fear they will contract the disease and look likewise. The psychological effect on the society is expressed through their fear of the house as we are told:

People who knew its tenant would stand at a safe distance and point at The House of Doom saying, ' There stands a lonely house...The house is as eerily silent as the grave... 'There lies the Living Dead '(36).

Mbela's house becomes a symbol of HIV/AIDS disaster in the society. The words 'grave' and 'living dead' show the society's prediction on those suffering from HIV/AIDS. It is associated with death, and parents even tell their children 'the journalist belonged to the world of the dead '(36). The irony of the situation is that in a way the society has a dead conscience and humanity. When they point at the house they are actually pointing at their own self. What we see is a reflection of Gogol's words: "What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!" (91) Mutahi satirizes a society that refuses to identify with a situation facing it directly. The society may be negative towards the infected individuals but the truth is HIV/AIDS is a societal issue:

All eyes in the estate were on The House of Doom. It was as if the residents were looking at a new outfit. The House of Doom stood out as a landmark. Not even many spectacular landmarks in the city were known like The House of Doom. (36)

From this description certain facts become clear. One is that HIV/AIDS is the concern of the whole society. The metaphor 'a new outfit' shows the extreme and extensive impact of the disease on the society. The word 'new' illustrates that the disease is a strange experience. It is something the society has not encountered before and now they have to live with it. From the postcolonial point of view we may argue that the disease is a result of the society's encounter with the Western world that has led to sexual moral decadence. The word 'landmark' is also metaphorically used as it indicates the lasting effects of the disease on the society. The house is a symbol of HIV/AIDS and its destructive nature on the society and this cannot be ignored. Mbela is physically, emotionally, and psychologically affected. His condition affects the society, for instance when he donates blood to Jenifa, the accident victim, she acquires the disease.

Jenifa's case is a disaster within a disaster. She is hit by a speeding matatu and Mbela offers help by taking her to Medina medical clinic and then donating blood to her. Unfortunately, she contracts the HIV/AIDS virus either from Mbela or from the needle that had been used on a patient with the virus. Mbela and even Dr Nzomo feel that the Clinic's medical staff may have been careless during this blood transfusion and therefore infected both Mbela and Jenifa. If it is the clinic's inefficiency then

what we experience is doom or disaster to the whole society. The clinic becomes a symbol of inefficiency of public institution, which enhances disaster in the society. The society is the affected lot. Hence, HIV/AIDS indiscriminately encompasses all.

The narrator says it was as if The House of Doom had been turned into nectar, the sweet liquid that Bees collect from flowers. The metaphor 'nectar' shows the curiosity and mystery the society has due to this disease. The people are curious because of its lack of a cure and the knowledge that its victim is destined to die. It also explains their ignorance and the malevolence they extend to the victims of HIV/AIDS. This is why the author refers to them as 'bees'. He says: 'the people laughing at Mbela were bees'. Bee stings are painful and destructive and many times they do cause death. By the use of the image of the 'bee' the author wants to show how the society contributes to the ultimate death of the HIV/AIDS victims. Bees destroy flowers in their search for nectar. The presence of people within Mbela's resident is hurting and disturbing. Instead of being of help to the patient the society gossips and insults Mbela, even the young do not spare him for: " little boys and girls laughed at Mbela and composed a ditty to mock him." (36) Mutahi takes a jibe at the society's failure to educate the young. In a way the society is responsible for the doom or ruin facing it now and the one to come, as the young are certainly not being given the right kind of education.

Mbela feels that the preacher who had pitched the tent beside his house does so to mock him: "The thrust of the message was that the world was coming to an end and that Nyakans should repent or face eternal fire and brimstone." (98) The allusion to the Biblical assertion to the end of the world brings out the doom aspect of the HIV/

AIDS scourge. The Bible associates the end of the world with inescapable disaster, strange diseases and total destruction. The preacher sums up his message by saying that only those who accept that Jesus Christ died for them will avoid this disease that has been sent by the Almighty to finish those who do not heed to the holy message spread by prophets. The allusions to the Bible clarify and intensify Mbela's suffering; it shows the hypocrisy and self-righteousness of the preacher and the society he is preaching to which has disowned and condemned Mbela. The allusion further emphasizes the importance and complexity of the question of suffering and its relation to goodness and evil in the society.

Through the device of a stream of consciousness we are able to see how Mbela encounters psychological torture. He wonders:

'Why?' he asked himself, 'had people come to mock him outside his house? Why had they decided that they had an answer to every question? ...suppose I get converted today, would I be cured? Suppose I went outside there and told them I am suffering from the disease they call a curse from God, would the preacher shake my hand and invite me to a meal in his house? No, he wouldn't. Most likely he and the rest of the congregation would stealthily walk away to avoid contracting the disease from me... '(98-99)

These thoughts show the effects of the society's insensitive attitude towards those affected and infected by HIV/AIDS. It is ironical that the preacher who should be the consoling agent should become the preacher of doom and intensify the stigma. He becomes an agent of destruction because he destroys Mbela's will to fight. In addition it explains the dilemma the HIV/AIDS victims find themselves in, this is whether the

seeking of the intervention of God or turning to witchdoctors would cure them. The internal monologue emphasizes the self-reproach Mbela undergoes and this increases his suffering.

The House of Doom becomes the place where Mbela experiences physical suffering, isolation, loneliness, and psychological torture. In a dream motif we see Mbela contemplating suicide: "What mattered now was that he was saying cheerio to The House of Doom." (159) In the third person omniscient narrator Mbela experiences psychological suffering as revealed to us:

Although he had not died yet, he had died many times in his dreams. The dreams featured him dead. He remembered a horrifying dream in which he saw himself dead and nobody wanted to touch him, even Wambui. An undertaker had stripped him of all his raiment to sell them to a second hand clothes dealer. (134)

By use of this dream motif the author satirizes the society's attitude towards the HIV AIDS' victim whom they fear and dissociate from but use their clothes after they die, "the dealer won't know where they came from," the undertaker had told himself." (134) The neighbours tell their children not to play near The House of Doom. Their fear is expressed in the following words:

'You never know with children they could pick up a piece of paper or cloth thrown out of that house and get the disease. I don't want my little Eddie to touch something that might cause him harm,' one parent would say. (145)

It is ironical that the same parents may buy the victims' clothes and use them and even pass them on to their children. The undertaker's act shows a materialistic society that would use any opportunity available for self-gain.

This chapter has looked at disaster and society in Doomsday and The House of Doom. It has drawn out two thematic concerns terrorism and the HIV/AIDS scourge. The chapter has discussed the issue of time and place in relation to the two novels. The time concept is contemporary and postcolonial. The place concept is universal and in particular Third World. The issues in question, HIV/AIDS and terrorism cannot be confined to one specific society or region. The whole universe is affected and live in fear of the virus and terrorists attacks.

CHAPTER THREE

EUPHEMISMS AS STYLE MUTAHI USES TO DEPICT CORRUPTION.

Levin L. Schucking in The sociology of Literary Taste says authors are open to influence by society, for nobody can resist indefinitely the effect of the thing that is constantly seen and heard. He adds that:

Just as in natural history the characteristic of fauna and flora can only be recognized in association with the peculiarities of the locality, so in the history of literature and colouring individuality proceed largely from the sociological soil from which the literary creation spring. (9)

Wahome Mutahi adopts Kenyan euphemism to depict the theme of corruption. The use of words and phrases commonly used within the Kenyan community reveals both the geographical and social background of his work. Mutahi depicts a society he is well acquainted with, an illustration of the point that he writes from direct experience as a Kenyan. Mutahi is fascinated by the idiosyncrasies that define our Kenyanness.

Macmillan English Dictionary defines euphemism as: "...a word or expression that people use when they want to talk about something unpleasant or embarrassing without mentioning the thing itself." (470) This study adopts the definition of euphemisms as code language that is only understood by those initiated into it. It is used among people familiar to each other or from the same locality. Euphemisms are colloquial in nature thus falls in the informal use of language. Indangasi says: "it usually manifests itself at the vocabulary level, and because it is mainly a spoken form it would have all the characteristics of speech..." (118) It is common in conversation and its use in the community breaks the issue of class barrier. Use of euphemism hides information therefore coats a crime like corruption. When a phrase

or a word is used as a euphemism it becomes a metaphor whose literal meaning is often dropped. Hence, the interpretation of some of the euphemisms in this study may take a metaphoric dimension. Euphemistic terms and phrases symbolize the whole idea of bribery.

The word corruption has negative connotations and consequently a number of phrases and words are often used in reference to it. A corrupt person does illegal or immoral things in order to gain money or power. Corruption can for example be defined as the use of public office for private gains where an official entrusted with carrying out a task by the public engages in some sort of malpractices for private enrichment. It is the dishonest or illegal behaviour of persons in positions of power especially when they accept money in exchange for rendering services they are already paid to give. Corruption is immoral and degrading and those known to be corrupt are despised by the society.

Mutahi's Doomsday is a story of deep corruption. Both high and low ranking officers are involved in acts of corruption. Its effects are disastrous to the society. The bomb manages to reach Kiribiti city due to immense corruption. It is imported from South Africa as a boiler. The fact that the source of the bomb registers it as a boiler explains how widespread corruption is on the continent. When it reaches the Anyisan coast due to corruption at the port offices the procedure of inspection is not followed. The officials at the gate are ready for a bribe to let the cargo pass without inspection.

Mutahi employs the use of third person narrator and in doing so portrays a number of commonly used Kenyan euphemisms that refer to the issue of corruption. Albert

Wamagolo is the current assistant commissioner of customs. He is aware that the officers at the gate would try to get a bribe as he had often done when he was in their position. We are told:

When he was at their station, bosses who took bribes and let cargo pass through the port without inspection had frustrated him. The bosses took all the 'tea' as they called bribes. He got little if anything. Now it was his chance to receive 'tea' and do to others what had been done unto him (13-14).

In Kenya 'tea' is one of the oldest euphemism used in reference to corruption. 'To receive tea' means to be bribed. Tea is a widely taken exotic drink all over the world and especially within the society Mutahi portrays. The use of 'tea' to refer to bribe therefore metaphorically shows how widespread corruption is. As a drug the euphemism 'tea' reveal the addictive nature of corruption. An addicted person to 'tea' is usually controlled by it and hence corruption controls the corrupted persons and the society in general. It seems that it becomes difficult to let go corruption once you have become part of it.

The euphemism 'tea' also shows corruption is an everyday practice. Just as tea is taken on daily basis by many people so is the practice of corruption. Wateru, one of the officers at the gate says: "Third time this week for him to call and order us to let a lorry through..."(15) this reveals how extensive corruption is for it takes place on almost daily bases. The narrator says Wamagolo had told himself that "even if he did not take the 'tea' someone else would" (15). This vicious circle of dishonesty is

further illustrated in the description below. Using the third person narrator point of view the author tells us about Albert Wamagolo's action:

As an assistant commissioner of customs, he had power. Power to let any cargo pass through the port without inspection. He had power over the juniors at the gate and elsewhere in the port. Power that he shared with others of his rank and above. Power that had made him enjoy watch over the two officers at the gate haggle over a bribe and then frustrate them when a deal was almost through (13).

The use of the third person narrator 'he' distances the narrator from the act, and this makes him objective. In this way he is able to give us a clear picture of the relationship between corruption and misappropriations of power. The repetition of the word 'power' in almost every sentence explains the fact that corruption is well manifested in those in authority. The parallelism in the syntactical structures explains the cyclic nature of corruption. Those in authority smoothen the process of corruption. It means that corruption is inherent as it is passed on from one generation to the other. Wamagolo behaves in the same way he had seen his bosses act. The narrator uses the word 'deal' to show that corruption is an agreement that involves two parties the giver and the receiver.

The officers at the gate where the bomb pass do not hastate to ask for their share of the bribe. The author uses the language of conversation or dialogue and creates an illusion of reality. For example when Makwaru and Iganji arrive at the gate the following conversation takes place:

“Morning gentlemen,” Makwaru said huskily, handing the papers in his hands to one of the officials.

“Not too bad,” replied the one whose nametag identified him as Abdi Ali.

“Only the weather and empty stomach –our empty stomachs seems to be a bother. (9-10)

The use of ‘empty stomach’ is an indirect method of asking for a bribe in the Kenyan society. In a country where food is scarce for the majority of people the euphemism ‘empty stomach’ seem quite appropriate for it calls for empathy other than accusation. It reflects the lack of basic needs of food and shelter for the majority of people. It stands out as evidence to the fact that the officers at the gate barely earn enough to cater for their daily needs. The use of ‘empty stomach’ is in line with the frequent food shortage experienced in the country as well as the low salaries civil servants get, which can hardly enable them buy the costly food. Hence even though corruption is evil one cannot overlook the poverty facing the society especially emanating from low salaries and unbalanced distribution of wealth. One of the officers, Ali, regrets not taking the five thousand bob they had been offered for it would have helped him pay rent for that month. We are told:

His thoughts were on his landlord who had threatened to throw him out if he did not pay his arrears on that day.... Two thousand and five hundred shillings would have silenced the landlord (15).

The use of the euphemism ‘stomach’ is enhanced when Lukulo loses the presidential seat for the third time and the narrator tells us: “ Once again the voters voted with

their stomachs.” (41) The candidate who had already ruled the country for twenty-five years manages to win the election due to profound bribery. The phrase to ‘vote with the stomach’ means to vote for that one who has enticed them with money or some other necessities as bribes. It shows greed for power and an ignorant materialistic society. It also reveals a poverty stricken society. The voters are more concerned with the present and not with the future. The society is dishonest for they vote for a candidate who gives them more money and thus encourage corruption among leaders. Lukulo is bitter because he is overpowered with his more corrupt and experienced opponent. Johannes Mtwapa goes full blast with his national presidential campaign and buys voters cards: “He spent money as it would not have value the following day....”(14). The politicians spent money because they know once they are elected they will be in a position to get more even if it means using the most dubious means.

The word ‘stomach’ is also used when Waluona tells Lukulo that public transport drivers “put their stomachs before anything else”. Waluona means that for drivers to cooperate with them in their mission of causing anarchy in the country they must be bribed first. Mutahi uses the euphemisms ‘stomach’ severally in The Jail Bugs. For example, Pancho tells Albert Kweyu that although money is not allowed in prison but it gets there: “... because these men in uniform, the wardens, also have mouths and stomachs.” (37)

Makwaru, Iganji, Wateru and Ali become party to a ‘talk’ that is to result into bribery. Note this conversation:

“Listen”, Iganji said almost in a whisper, “we can talk. It is not unlike gentlemen to talk.”

“Talk? Are we not talking already?” asked Wateru

“I mean talk as in man to man talk,” whispered Iganji

“Talk so that we can understand one another better, you know”, added Makwaru.(11)

The word ‘Talk’ is a Kenyan way of demanding or asking whether one wants to be bribed, and if so by how much. It is the word commonly used when two or more people are sizing each other for exchange of bribes and services. The word ‘talk’ implies conversation thus involvement of two or more parties hence the giver and the receiver. Bribery is an immoral and unlawful act and that is the reason why Iganji talks in whispers and employs the euphemism ‘talk’, for he fears being overheard. It is ironical that they should think and state that they are gentlemen, even while discussing and getting involved in this immoral act. Makwaru says: ‘Money talks, brother. Money talks (12).’ Monetary benefit becomes more important than honesty and efficiency. One only needs to have money to acquire what one wants be it getting a job, or having a specific unlawful job done.

The bribe Makwaru wants to give the officers is small; yet the effects on the society will be felt for a long time to come. The bomb explosion disables, orphans and kills hundreds of people. What this actually means is that the mothers and fathers disabled will find themselves in situations where they are no longer able to work and provide for their families’ basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and even education. This may result in the suffering of many people for a number of generations to come and may even increase the vicious circle of corruption.

The officers get frustrated when their boss Wamagolo calls them and tells them to let the cargo pass. The cargo earns Wamagolo four hundred thousands Anyisa money. It would have been six hundred thousands but he has to bribe other port officials so that they remain silent. Wamagolo buys a beach plot and to avoid speculation he registers it under his wife's name. The report given by TI says:

To reduce the risk of detection, entry into bribery market for both payers and receivers is limited to people who are known and trusted-relatives, close friends, members of the village or tribe.” (Daily Nation)

Wamagolo sees this as divine providence: “ God can be very kind.” This is one way in which the author satirizes the hypocrisy in the society. It is an escapist utterance as the religious pose provides a temporary relieve on their guilty consciousness. In spite of the fact that corruption is all about dishonesty Wamagolo feels that God has actually been kind to him. The irony of the situation is that what Wamagolo celebrates as a kind action from God paves the way that causes disaster to many people.

The act of corruption is wholly manifested in public institutions and this affects the whole society. The chain link in corruption deals shows how corruption is deeply entrenched in the entire society. Wateru tells Ali, ‘we could have made our cut were it not for you’. The phrase ‘made our cut’ means they too would have had a share of the bribe if they had not spoilt the opportunity by bargaining.

Ismail realizes that for his plan to succeed he has to get an Anyisan passport. Due to corruption in the immigration offices he finds it extremely easy to achieve his goal. The narrator tells us:

All he required was money and a person to link him to the right person in the immigration department.

He did not spend a single coin to get the passport. His good links saw to that.

The new passport came in two days and it was as genuine as his own incisors.

(32)

The simile 'as genuine as his own incisors' shows that the acquired passport looks so real that one would not know it was counterfeit. This shows that those in this chain of transaction are qualified people: the society's elite. The corrupt are not the ignorant and the unemployed in the society. The reason given for the efficiency is the monetary benefits: "Anyisans work very fast particularly where money is involved." (52) This statement reveals a greedy society. The phrase 'good links' means to know somebody who is corrupt and is willing to go out of the ordinary and achieve a corrupt goal for somebody else. Ismail recruits Lukulo since he knows he has, "good connections in the police force" (55). The phrase 'good connections' is similar to the idea of 'good links'. This again explains the chain of persons involved in specific corrupt 'deals'.

Those who do not have someone to link him or her to the 'right people' are doomed to a life of suffering. In The House Doom Gitau tells Wambui:

‘ Without special training in something, it is hard to get anywhere. Well, not unless you have *a tall relative* somewhere who can put in *a strong word for you.*’(122-123)

The phrase ‘tall relative’ means to know or be related to a person in high authority who can ‘link’ you to those others in authority. The euphemism, ‘tall relative’ is earlier on used in Francis Imbuga’s Betrayal in the City by the *askari* who brings tea to Mosese in the cell. He tells him: “Here, tea with milk, yet you don’t even belong to my tribe. You need *a tall relative* to get anything these days.”(31) The euphemism reveals nepotism in the society. People in authority engage those of their tribe, clan and family. It also shows that corruption is not just giving and receiving in material forms. It can be verbal where one party request or commands the other to do him a favour, like employing a relative of his or hers. Those employed may not necessarily be qualified but are given jobs as a result of their relatives in authority. Wambui cannot get a job because she does not know anyone in authority to connect or link her to those with job vacancies and hence she is forced into prostitution: “...for as far as she could see, it was either harlotry or a miserable life for her and her two children.”(117)

In another situation a city tycoon meets the commissioner of prisons and tells him:

“A friend of a friend needs some help. Not much help but only you can help.”

“If the friend of your friend is not asking me to close a prison, I might help.”

....

“The friend of my friend says that it is a petty crime and that he is very willing to do something in consideration.” (103)

The phrase: 'The friend of my friend' enhances more the idea of the chain link accompanying acts of corruption. It is synonymous to 'good links' and 'good connections'. This chain of people leads to the release of five young men who had been arrested for administering an oath. It is these young men who become Lukulo's strong supporters and therefore indirectly succumb to Ismail's evil act. Note the use of the word 'something' to refer to bribe. This 'something' turns out to be 'a bulky envelope' the tycoon secretly gives to the commissioner. We are told: "its weight pleased him and he smiled a very broad smile." Irongo, the tycoon pockets his commission from Lukulo to facilitate the deal.

Superintendent George Kinyua in charge of Nangani Government prison receives a call from a lawyer known to him very well ordering him to release five young men who had been jailed for administering an illegal oath: " when the lawyer called with such urgency, he always knew that there was something for him" (101). The phrase 'there was something for him' refers to the two hundred thousand shillings he receives to release the prisoners. He had often done so after being induced by the same lawyer and others in the past. The word 'something' is a general euphemistic term that implies bribery or money.

Lukulo does not believe his second loss in his bid to become the president of Anyisa. He had relied on the strength of tribal arithmetic who believed:

...that one of their own would take the mantle and as it is said in Anyisa, give the tribe a chance to 'eat' as the other tribes had done simply because they had produced a head of state (40).

The euphemism 'eat' refers particularly to corruption that come about as a result of political leadership. To 'eat' means to be given priority, which could be in terms of jobs, construction of public facilities and other forms of material gain. Characteristics of nepotism are evident in the way the word has been used above. The rise of a political leader from a certain locality or ethnic group means a time to benefit even if it means at the expense of other regions or tribes. This portrays a self-centred society where individuals and especially leaders only think of their own. Imbuga also employs the euphemism when one of his characters Tumbo is given the job of looking for a playwright and a lot of money is given for this project. Tumbo feels he should "eat and let eat."(47) Whoever is in power will simply take the opportunity to 'eat' for this is a society where wealth is taken as a sign of prestige and power. Ironically the politician is then treated as a hero in his own locality. Outa says the term 'eat' is a broad generalization that tends to criminalize the entire ethnic community or group of people living in the same locality.

Lukulo is involved in illegal trade in guns. He says he finds this business expensive and he has to part with large amounts of money in bribing those he deals with. He wants help from Jareng and tells him:

"I am paying dearly to bring in my supplies from South Africa because I have to grease too many hands...."

"For every gun I bring into the continent, I lose fifty dollars in greasing hands." (47)

The euphemism 'greasing hands' makes the crime sound mild almost attractive. To grease something is to lubricate it so that movement becomes free and possible. Lukulo has to bribe some people to make it possible to operate this illegal trade. The

euphemism implies that unless Lukulo gives bribe he will not be able to operate this unlawful business. Money makes what would be difficult to achieve become simple to accomplish. Jareng uses import papers of Zambuka army to ship his ammunition and arms to Africa. He also does this for others. To do the same for Lukulo, Jareng demands seventy dollars for every AK- 47 and a half a dollar for every bullet. The fact that these guns are imported out of the continent is a sign of the destructive presence of the West in Postcolonial Africa.

A group of public transport drivers and their touts call for a strike protesting police harassment. The narrator tells us:

It was a genuine complaint as the police in Anyisa was given to exercising extortion by demanding specific amounts of protection money from drivers to overlook their real and imaginary faults (80-81).

What Mutahi refers to, as 'Protection money' is bribe given to the police by public transport drivers. Once the police receive this inducement they do not charge them for any unlawful acts. This increases inefficiency in the police sector and also in the public transport sector. It also causes disaster such as fatal road accidents and inconveniences those who depend on this transport when strikes of protest take place.

Lukulo bribes the secretary general of Kiribiti municipal workers' union so that he can make the city ungovernable. Lukulo sees these men as 'just a small mind to be used when need arose (83).' It is ironical that he should describe these men using the phrase 'small mind'. This is exactly what Ismail think of him and the others when he calls them 'idiots'. Ismail says: "I just love idiots. Five more to go."(125) To be of 'small mind' or "an idiot" is to behave or act in a stupid manner. Those who get

involved in acts of corruption make fools of themselves for they never try to reflect on the immediate and long-term effects of their actions. Lukulo and his group suffer death as a result of their corrupt nature.

It is so easy for Olwe to rent a house at powerhouse. Most of the rooms are vacant due to the high rent. Therefore, when Olwe takes interest in one of their rooms, the agents of the building do not take any precaution for they are simply interested in the money he is to pay them. The narrator says:

Olwe knew the conditions beforehand and came armed with a fake identity card. Such cards were available for a song in a city where getting a fake degree certificate that looked as original as a genuine one took only one hour after payment of the necessary amount of money (86-87).

The phrase 'available for a song' shows how easy it is to get a forged identity card. One does not need to have lots of money to get false documents even a degree certificate. Bribery money ranges from big to small amounts. Noble institutions such as those of education are also affected. When individuals operate on fake certificates the result is inefficiency.

Lukulo buys land, where he settles the Wasimba sect. To avoid paying tax; he keeps it a secret from all his acquaintances except Irene Kivula. The narrator tells us:

She was the only one apart from Lukulo who knew legally who owned the farm and some of his other properties. That way, he stayed at arm's length from the prying eyes of the tax man (91).

To stay 'at arm's length' means that Lukulo is not afraid of imprisonment because very few people are aware of his crime. Due to corruption there are many criminals who remain free men and women. Lukulo is able to evade payment of tax and remain a free man. When criminals evade the law crime increases. The fact that Lukulo easily bribes the police makes it possible for him to engage in one crime after the other without the fear of being caught and judged by the law.

When Lukulo is asked by Jareng to assist Ismail Lukulo realizes that Ismail is in for some big and dangerous engagement. He decides that, "he could only agree to the venture if the price was right...(55)." The idea of 'the price' being 'right' refers to exorbitant bribery, the amount that blinds one to the truth. It is easy to poison the Khat team because Ismail and his accomplice in the kitchen agree on 'a handsome price'. Ismail is let in the kitchen and in a quick movement of the hands he laces the breakfast pork with poison. The phrase 'handsome price' is a synonymy of the price being 'right'. Both are used to show the large amount of money spent in corruption 'deals'. Symbolically it shows that the effects of corruption on society are very expensive. It leads to the destruction of both life and property. The phrases above are similar to Imbuga's use of the phrase 'the size of the potato.'(56) Ismail spends a lot of money in bribery; he even bribes a clerk of the hotel they are staying in the night before the bomb blast:

He was earning the five thousand shillings that were in his pocket that Ismail had given him with instructions to call his room immediately if Makwaru or Iganji attempted to leave the hotel. (109)

The day after the bomb attack Ismail bribes the policeman on his way to the airport. The dialogue that ensues between the two shows that the policeman wants to be given a bribe:

“Nobody cares about a poor policeman.”

Ismail laughed and said, “Don’t say nobody cares.”(308)

Ismail then gives the policeman a five hundred Anyisa note, which the policeman crumbles into his fists and salutes. Indangasi says that euphemisms are an interesting source for comedy. In this humorous and satirical conversation, Mutahi makes fun of the police force. The policeman’s utterance ‘nobody cares’ is an indirect method of asking for money from Ismail. The inefficiency of the police force is again noted for this policeman is just thinking of himself and does not even realize he is letting the bomber pass.

This chapter has discussed the role of euphemism in depicting corruption. Different euphemisms such as tea, eat, empty stomach, greasing hands, tall relatives and other terms in relation to corruption have been explained. The use of these indirect terms to refer to the theme of corruption shows the society’s awareness of its evil. The people are conscious of it and in a way ashamed of it and that is why it cannot directly be referred to by its outright name. It also shows that the individuals involved live in fear of being caught and exposed to the whole society.

CHAPTER FOUR

BETRAYAL, HOPE AND SYMBOLISM

Edgar V. Roberts states:

Characters often engage in actions that are so typical that they stand out as representatives of ideas and values.

In effect, characters who stand for ideas may assume symbolic status...

In this way, such characters may be equated directly with particular ideas, and to talk about them is a shorthand way of talking about the ideas. (366)

Various characters and their actions embody the ideas of betrayal and hope in Mutahi's novels. Mutahi depicts both personal and political betrayals. Betrayal is portrayed as one of the major issues contributing to the disasters of HIV/AIDS and terrorism in the society. By use of various characters, their actions and conditions we experience betrayal of personal relationships, of principles and betrayal of a Nation.

Mutahi's Doomsday is a story of the betrayal of a nation. The society portrayed is corrupt and materialistic. Individuals are concerned about their own needs and care little about the future of their country. There is the lack of the spirit of patriotism for the officers at the port accept bribe in spite the fact that the cargo they are letting through without inspection may be dangerous. Albert Wamagolo and his acquaintances are portrayed as irresponsible and materialistic. They fail in a duty entrusted on them by the public when they let the cargo pass without inspection. They betray the people of Anyisa, their jobs and the government that has entrusted them with this responsibility.

Makwaru and Iganji are also involved in an act of betrayal. The two are aware that they are betraying the people of Anyisa but do nothing about it. Iganji thinks they may have been betrayed:

Betrayal was common in Anyisa. Iganji had betrayed others for money. He could have been betrayed in the same way, he reasoned. In any case, he was at the moment involved in an act of betrayal. (9)

This reveals a society whose actions are governed by monetary benefits. It is a sign of a materialistic greedy society. Makwaru's dream symbolizes this betrayal. He undergoes a psychological disturbance as a result of this betrayal. They betray their citizenship and the whole human race that could easily be wiped out by the bomb they are transporting to Roinabi.

The general mood in Doomsday reflects a people betrayed. We note political betrayal in the uprising of the Wasimba sect. The sect symbolizes disillusionment and the dissatisfaction of the masses arising from unfulfilled promises of independence. The Wasimbe sect reasons:

It was that their grandfathers who had been killed and maimed in the long drawn and bloody freedom struggle had been betrayed. That those who had taken over from the colonial government had sold out to foreigners. That those who had succeeded them had continued the betrayal. That something had to be done to exorcise the country of its spiritual and political putrefaction (24).

Those who fought for independence have been betrayed because nothing has actually been achieved. The people had hoped that justice would be restored, poverty would

be eradicated and even they would get employment but this is all in vain. The narrator tells us that the Wasimba members were full of the poor in the city who were even getting poorer and poorer. The people saw in it a message of hope and as such members of the Wasimba grew and so did its militancy. The postcolonial leaders inherit the colonizer's ways and therefore alienate themselves from the people. They inherit a materialistic and individualistic attitude that results into a corrupt society. The colonizers' tradition is passed on from one generation of leaders to the next and this culminates into discontentment. The people feel betrayed.

It is ironical that the Wasimba sect feels that they can save the country from poor leadership. The irony of their decision is that they will be no better for Waluona tells Lukulo: 'We know we shall be handsomely be rewarded when you win,' he said firmly." (42) It is ironical that their saviour figure is a corrupt traitor. They decide to support Lukulo in his ambition to overthrow the government and become the president. The Wasimba sect only helps him in the betrayal of his Nation and people of Anyisa whom they are part of. Ismail makes them believe he is on their side but due to their gullibility he manipulates them into betraying their own countrymen.

Lukulo is a symbolic political figure. He represents and captures the shortcomings of political leadership. He is ambitious and greedy for power. While in the university he is the student leader and the narrator says: "...he was known as the Rat, or the one who knew how to bite and blow on the wound so that the victim did not realize that he was being chewed up (43)." He betrays his fellow students by colluding with the vice-chancellor. Lukulo is so cunning that his fellow students cannot realize that he is playing a trick on them. Lukulo manages to convince the students against

demonstration during the commemoration of an assassinated M.P as we are told: “ the commemoration normally marked by hooliganism that year became like a Bible study session.”(44) A month later Lukulo leaves to Britain and the students name him ‘Rat’. Lukulo is a parasite in the society. His sly nature and ambitions make him a treacherous man. The narrator says:

It was a grand scheme that he had drawn. He desperately wanted to go and study abroad but he did not have means... He walked into the vice-chancellor’s office and offered himself for sale. He would quit student leadership and in consideration, he was to get a fully paid scholarship to study abroad (43).

Lukulo is not concerned about anybody else other himself. He betrays Waluona, a man who had introduced him to the Wasimba sect, his major supporters. He does not tell him of the bomb they are deciding to plant at the American embassy and even refuses to answer his telephone calls. This hurts Waluona so much that he decides to inform the authorities at the American embassy. Makwaru who threatens traitors with death, ‘ Traitors deserve only one thing-death (95)’ is one of the first to die in the bomb blast. This ironical happening shows that it is Makwaru and his acquaintances like Lukulo who are the actual enemies of the people. The author does not advocate for violence as means to a better government.

Mutahi portrays a government that uses police harassment to get information from people. The police commissioner is given the name Nyoori meaning ‘a man of the club’. During the rescue process the crowd shout: “Where are the police who are always ready to beat up demonstrators.” (217) The police use torture on the Wasimba

members [ALA] so that they name the people behind the bomb attack. The government portrayed is one that has failed to restore justice. The Wasimba may be wrong but why use violence on them. The government and its various institutions have betrayed the people of Anyisa.

After the bomb blast the Anyisans expect to receive support from the Americans since it was the American embassy that was the target of the attack. They feel betrayed when the American marines arrive and seal off the American embassy threatening anybody coming close to it. The Americans are only interested in the rescue of their own people and do not even try to rescue those affected in the neighbouring building. Colonel Hydes is persuaded by Private Disney to let their rescue team join those in the adjacent-affected building but Hydes insist that the American interest must be taken care off first before any help was offered to anybody else. Colonel Hydes' attitude symbolizes the colonialist's or the Westerners attitude that still lingers towards former colonies in Third World Countries. Colonel Hydes suffers from a superiority complex of his race and the developed world. He feels that their needs should come first in spite of the sufferings beside him

Mutahi does not just portray political betrayal alone; he also portrays personal betrayals that culminate into destruction of certain individuals in the society. In The House of Doom Mbela is a symbol of betrayal. He betrays his best friend Kamako when he decides to take his girl friend Mueni from him. Kamako loves Mueni but Mueni chooses to be unfaithful: "little did Kamako know that Mueni was betraying his love, leave alone flirting with Mbela (16)." We perceive personal betrayals whereby Mbela betrays his friend, Kamako and the trust Kamako has in him. Mueni

betrays Kamako and the love Kamako has for her. Kamako suffers betrayal from his two close friends.

When Mueni tells Kamako that she had found her dream man Kamako knows that his friend Mbela has snatched Mueni from him 'the way a bully takes away a sweet from the mouth of a child'. (19) This comparison portrays Kamako's innocence and helplessness. It shows the cruelty of acts of betrayal. Kamako is so affected that: 'He felt small like a termite'. (19) The image of 'termite' explains Kamako's loss of self-confidence. Apart from the fact that a termite is small in size it is also vulnerable and therefore easy to destroy. Symbolically, therefore, Mbela destroys his friend Kamako.

Kamako '... felt separated from Mueni the way the chaff is separated from grain (19)'. This means that their relationship is broken beyond repair. The narrator calls Mueni 'chaff' meaning she becomes useless or rubbish having degraded herself by her dishonest behaviour. Kamako is the clean 'grain' although this comparison becomes ironical when he turns to heavy drinking and reckless sexual exploits. He is led in this path of destruction by the betrayal of his two best friends. Kamako is a symbol of those who have been forced by fate to face life with an attitude of resignation and acquiescence.

Mbela also experiences suffering as a result of this betrayal. Before approaching Mueni he encounters a psychological struggle within himself. The narrator uses the stream of consciousness as a technique and reveals Mbela contemplating on whether to approach Mueni or not. It is said that inside his heart two voices competed against each other:

‘Come on Mbela! Be a man. Mueni is a winner. Look at those dimpled cheeks and shapely legs. She’s curved gracefully. She’s yearning for you. Grab her man,...’

The other voice would tell him:

‘Don’t sacrifice friendship because of infatuation. Kamako respects you, he is a true friend,’ the voice of the gentleman in him said. ‘Mbela, read one of the ten commandments it says: *You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife*. Now I am telling you Mbela you shall not covet your friend’s dame.’ (17)

The internal monologue shows that Mbela experiences a guilty conscious even before the actual betrayal takes place. This internal monologue is a sign of the psychological torture Mbela is experiencing and also it foreshadows the consequences of Mbela’s action. The allusion to the Bible portrays Mbela’s lustful nature, which hastens this betrayal. On the other hand it also reveals that he is a man with a keen sense of good and evil and that is why he suffers guilt before he even approaches Mueni.

Mbela’s thoughts assume a poetic structure:

Oh boy, look at Mueni’s heart

The heart is yearning for your heart

The heart is hurtling towards you, dancing hip hop

The heart is not maimed the heart is not jammed

The voice of the gentleman in him persists:

Let me lay it on the line

You are out of line

Don’t touch Mueni

Touch her at your peril

Touch your heart and pray

Ask God to forgive you

You are a sinner, not a winner. (17-18)

The voice of the seducer wins and we are told: "a game of betrayal had started." (18) The introduction of the poetic style in this prose work prepares us for the romantic life between Mbela and Mueni. We are told: 'The relationship between Mbela and Mueni blossomed like coffee berries during a season of plenty... The duo was like Siamese twins joined at the hips.'(19) The mention of ' Siamese twins' foreshadows the tragic end of Mbela and Mueni. The repetition in the poem creates rhythm and this is enhanced by the alliterations, 'heart is hurtling' and 'hip hop'. The repetition enhances the warning in Mbela's sub conscious. The poetic internal monologue serves as a warning to Mbela for he feels he is 'out of line', which shows that he is engaging himself in an act that can land him in danger 'Touch her at your peril'.

This poem keeps the reader guessing as to whether Mbela might have likely contracted the virus from Mueni. If we adopt the definition of doomsday as the Day of Judgment then we can conclude that Mbela is condemned when he acquires the HIV virus as a punishment for betraying his best friend. The thoughts in Mbela foreshadow what later happens to him, 'you are a sinner, not a winner.' These internal monologues symbolize a struggle between good and the evil. They reveal the dual personality in Mbela. The author urges the reader to be keen in 'listening' to our subconscious.

Mbela's colleagues do not want to meet him. When he was well he had frequently invited them to his house for parties. When they learn that he is sick and is HIV positive none of them visits him at home. We are told: "Mbela remembered with bitterness that none of his colleagues ever missed his parties." (52) At the Chronicle newspaper, Nancy, a journalist with whom he had shared drinks and many ideas for a story greets him hesitantly and rushes to wash her hand before calling a private doctor to ask whether one could contract the disease after shaking hands with a person who is HIV positive. Nancy's action symbolizes ignorance and fear of death. She represents all those who are misinformed and have no clear facts about the HIV/AIDS virus. It is partly due to this lack of proper knowledge that they betray Mbela.

Mbela realizes that his boss Ngorio was not in anyway different from the reporters and the sub-editors who looked at him as if he was a leper. The betrayal agitates him and he storms out of the office in rage. This creates the chance for his boss to sack him. Mutahi uses the letter technique to highlight further the theme of betrayal as we see below:

Dear Bloggs Mbela, The chronicle newspaper regrets to let you know that your services have been terminated with immediate effect. I need not elaborate on the causes of the termination but your behaviour...(56-57).

The letter is slipped under Mbela's door. The fact that the editor does not invite Mbela to receive this letter shows his action of sacking him is not justifiable. Ngorio does not have concrete reason for sacking Mbela. The letter reveals Ngorio's personal feelings but depersonalises the relationship between him and Mbela. It does not give room for emotions and robs the receiver, Mbela in this case, the chance for a

dialogue. It also heightens disappointment and as such deepens the act of betrayal. Mbela feels betrayed for he has spent eight years of hard work as a journalist, but reaps nothing. This turn of events is ironical for Mbela the traitor of his friend Kamako, becomes now the betrayed. The hunter turns out to be the hunted. The Chronicle staff and the chief editor who are now the traitors symbolize the many institutions and colleagues who have rejected members of their staff after they are diagnosed HIV/AIDS positive. Their action is a statement on the insensitive and selfish nature of our society.

It is not just Mbela's colleagues who betray him his family disown him. His family signifies rejection of HIV/AIDS victim by their relations. He tells Wambui: 'Had the world been kind to me I would not have been treated like toilet paper by people of my blood.'(142) The simile 'like a toilet paper' shows how the family abandons him as a result of his condition. It appears like while he was well, they benefited from him but now that the disease has disabled him, they completely do not want anything to do with him. It is no wonder he tells Wambui: "My relatives ceased to exist when I became sick. They are no longer my people." (143) The family alienates itself from Mbela and in turn Mbela finds cause to alienate himself from them. He writes a will that singles out Wambui as the sole inheritor of his meagre wealth after he dies. By this action the author commends people who write wills so as to avoid conflict after they die.

Santole symbolizes the marital infidelity scandals experienced in many societies. Wambui encounters treachery when Santole takes advantage of her innocence, young age and the death of her parents and tricks her into marrying him. She accepts

because she trusts him as a man of God and therefore believes he cannot deceive her. Santole betrays his Christian practices that advocate for monogamy. Later on Santole writes a letter to Wambui where he declares to her that he had another wife whom he has to go back to:

Dear Wambui,

I am writing this letter with a heavy heart..... ...

I did not tell you that I had a mukyala [wife] and children at home in Ndauga.

I forgot mukyala wange [my wife] Florence and my three children...I am her true mwami [husband](48).

Once again we encounter the use of a letter technique in this act of betrayal. Like Mbela's boss, Ngorio, Santole has no courage to face the person he is destroying. This shows that he is ashamed and guilty of his actions. Santole betrays Florence, Wambui and his children from both women. Wambui had trusted him to the extent of leaving her job when he advised her to do so. Santole is a symbol of men who betray their wives and deceive young girls. After Santole abandons her, she can hardly tell the path that her life would take from that moment. The letter technique distances the traitor from the betrayed. It avoids the kind of violence we see in the face-to-face encounter of the unfaithful husband with his wife at Sans bar. By use of the letter technique the author is able to free Wambui of Santole. Her life is never the same again for Santole silently walks out of her life and she has to adapt a new lifestyle.

Wambui is forced into prostitution, a choice that is the direct effect of Santole's betrayal. She finds herself in successive trends of betrayals. Her friend Wairimu invites her for an evening outing and makes secret arrangement with her friend to

“bring the village Queen she was staying with...” (81) When Wambui is referred to as ‘village Queen’ we are able to see her innocent rural upbringing. We see the evil of the postcolonial city that is about to deform and alter a girl who had carried herself with dignity ‘queen’ to a morally decadent one. The friends plan a mixture of drinks that would make her ‘eyes see purple’, meaning become almost unaware of herself. Wairimu knows of this plan and purposely does not warn her friend and therefore Wambui becomes a victim of a treacherous world. The narrator tells:

Like a mouse caught in a trap, Wambui had fallen into a trap. Like a starved hyena devouring its prey, the luscious scheming Charlie feasted on the dazed Wambui. (84)

The use of the word ‘doom’ in the titles Doomsday and The House of Doom signifies a society disillusioned as a result of betrayal. Moral decadence is portrayed in the characters’ dishonesty and sexual pervasion that culminates into incidents of betrayals. In spite of this Mutahi is able to present characters whose actions symbolize hope. Even in his first novel Three Days on The Cross Mutahi uses Wandie to portray hope. Although Wandie is among those who oppress prisoners, we are told “..he felt time had come to atone for the inhumanity that he engaged in.”(146) When he meets the editor P’Njiru to tell him of Chipota’s whereabouts he says: “ It is good for us and the country that the information be known and that is why I came to you.” (159) Thus Mutahi is right from the on set a writer of hope.

After the bomb blast the Wasimba group are supposed to cause chaos and this would have worsened the situation. The failure of the insurrection signifies hope. The fact that the police arrest a number of them as they are on their way to cause anarchy and

loot guns from the police stations signifies police efficiency. In this incident the police are not bribed to work but know it is their duty.

The death of Lukulo, Iganji, Makwaru, Olwe and all those who cooperate with Ismail symbolize the ultimate end of evil or crime in the society. It bestows the hope of a society that has lost trust in acts of their men and women. This vision is enhanced when Ismail's plane is ordered back to Kiribiti city. The bomber does not manage to escape but takes his own life. All these events symbolizes that terrorism attacks will one day come to an end.

Private Disney is presented as a symbol of hope for he strongly feels the American marines should unite with the rescuers in the adjacent building and work together. When Dr Susan realizes that the marines are doing nothing to help she courageously approaches them and demands for their lighting system. Eventually not only do they provide the light but also they join the rescue team. It is important to note that Dr Susan makes a move to get the help that is needed. She does not just watch, blame and condemn. Individuals such as Dr Susan and Private Disney are symbolic of peaceful relations that exist between one Nation and the other. Dialogue and not silence is essential for commencement of peaceful relations between one Nation and the other.

Wahome's second dedication of Doomsday is directed:

To those men, women, boys and girls
who gaved life, and did all in their power
to bring about a smile after that

wanton and cowardly act of

August 7 1998, in Nairobi.

The large crowd that gathers outside the American embassy aim at saving life. While the president is in the helicopter the narrator tells us: “He saw a civilian running a head of one of the cars, clearing way for it.” (173) When the crowd realizes that the rescue process is slow most of them get on top of the rubble and dismantle stone by stone with their bare hands. The deputy ambassador is rescued and the crowd cheer:

They were happy another person had been saved. They did not care whether he was the ambassador of the United States or not. All they cared was that another person had come from the explosion alive (196).

The crowd symbolizes hope as they demonstrate a humanitarian attitude expected of the human race. Aspects of tribe, race or even economic status cease to take precedence for the people become united in one bond of saving life. Nyoori says: “We must appreciate what the ordinary people have done to assist rescue work.”(226) At the bomb blast scene a food tent is set up by a catering firm to feed the rescuers. A drinking water company and a soda company supply free drinks. A blood donor tent is set and individuals donate blood without being pushed. The actions of all these people symbolize a strong social vision of the society Mutahi portrays. Tragedy creates a moment of unity, where whites, Asians and blacks all unite in one course. The actions of these men and women symbolize a unified Nation.

Dr Susan and her team of doctors, nurses and the driver work tirelessly the whole day and night. They symbolize hope of a doomed Nation for their aim is to save as much life as possible. Dr Susan takes control of the situation as we are told she: “moved like a general in a battlefield as she dated from bed to bed...”(226). She is the first

doctor to arrive at the scene of the bomb blast and only evacuates after the last survivor had been rescued. Dr Susan's determination can be compared to Dr Nzomo in The House of Doom who persists on finding how Jenifa had acquired the HIV virus. The doctors are the symbols of integrity in the society

Dr Miheso at the Anyisan referral National hospital works equally hard to save life. He sheds tears at seeing so much suffering and death. His tears symbolize the compassionate feeling doctors have for their patients. Dr Miheso is not just treating them as a professional but he cares about them and he is saddened by the doom that has hit the society. His tears add a personal touch to his job as a doctor and therefore enhance commitment and hope for many people. Mutahi demonstrates a keen presentation of doctors' role in the society. The picture he create is that of an elite group that is still determined to demonstrate care for others, is conscious of sacrifice, efficiency and hard work.

The survivors of the bomb attack symbolize hope in the society. Ismail is not pleased with the news that the American ambassador has been found alive. He switches off the television when it is reported that Pauline, the last survivor, had been rescued. Ismail's aim had been to create a hopeless situation, so any signs of hope displease him. Subiri, who writes the actual happening of the bomb blast at the American embassy in Nairobi, tells us:

Finally on Wednesday at 3am, a body of a woman was removed. It was Rose's, the last survivor. She had braved five days of cold and darkness, going without food or water. Her story symbolized hope (46).

Indeed, surviving through any kind of disaster and having the determination to live on is a significant pictogram of hope. In spite the betrayal hope prevails among all those directly or indirectly affected by the disastrous event of the bomb blast.

Mutahi shows how change of attitude can alter disillusioned individuals to people with hope in the society. Mbela makes an ironical about turn and instead of locking himself in The House of Doom and waiting for his destiny, he opts to serve the community that has betrayed him. Although he is stigmatised in the society, he chooses to talk about his condition. When he calls the press conference, his colleagues in the journalist world maintain their sarcasm and scorn but he tells them:

“The disease I am suffering from has been diagnosed as AIDS. I now wish to confirm the diagnosis so that it is no longer a matter of speculation and wild rumours.” (170)

Mbela talks of how the knowledge that he has the virus had made him withdraw from the public life but now he has decided to face the truth openly. He says: “I have decided to tell anyone who is willing to listen about this scourge that is eating me...That will be my mission until I die.” (171) Mbela’s decision is a sign of hope for now he realizes that he has a responsibility in the society. He is going to educate the society on the disease he is suffering from. Mbela is well informed about the disease as he is living with it and also during the retreat from the rest of the society he gets the opportunity to read about it and understand it better than others do. By talking about it, he may save others and help those infected manage to live with it; and it also serves as a good example in the society for those others who may be afraid to come up in the open. It is a symbolic rebirth for Mbela.

Mbela announces his decision to marry Wambui, the only companion, soul mate and source of consolation and comfort he has had. This decision is symbolic. Marriage can be seen to be a symbol of continuity and hope. Wambui and Mbela may not get children as Wambui is enlightened on the use of the condom and they are both conscious of Mbela's HIV status but marriage will ensure that Mbela is in a loving and caring relationship and this alone will contribute to his living longer than expected. Since Mbela has made up his mind to openly talk about his condition his living a bit longer will definitely contribute to saving life.

In The House of Doom Wambui is a symbol of hope and renewal. After she is forced into prostitution she realizes that in this 'profession' one can easily acquire the HIV/AIDS virus. The narrator says:

Then, like other women earning their living by *selling their bodies*, Wambui had insisted that her partners use condoms. A packet of the sheaths never missed from her handbag. It came in handy for clients who did not carry any.

(146)

The fact that Wambui and the other prostitutes do not wait to acquire the disease and die is a sign of hope in the society. They refuse to be carefree prostitutes. Many of these girls are drawn into prostitution as a result of lack of jobs as seen in the case of Wambui This seems to be the easily available opportunity for them to earn their living. They symbolize destroyed innocence. When they make sure that their clients use condoms it shows that they actually have no intention of causing doom to themselves. The adoption of Wambui's children by a British philanthropist

symbolizes hope for the unfortunate and the betrayed children in the society for he adopts them as a form of support.

The emergence of Wambui in Mbela's life is a sign of hope for Mbela as well for the society. She resurrects in Mbela the impetus to live. Mbela looks forward and values her visits to his house:

The footsteps had a familiar sound. Mbela had heard the sound before. Like Pavlov's Dogs which drooled at the sound of bells, Mbela's heart pumped with joy. The footsteps had become part of the tonic that gave him energy to live another day. Today, like yesterday and the day before, he yearned for those footsteps. Tap, tap, tap, they sounded like a dripping tap (84).

The comparison of Wambui's steps to Pavlov's dogs, symbolizes provision and the frequency of her visits. It also means that Wambui maintains a certain schedule or routine showing her determination in the responsibility she takes upon herself. This is enhanced by the use of the idiophone 'tap, tap, tap' to describe her steps that further symbolizes the frankness of her visits. The author compares Wambui's steps to 'a dripping tap' and by use of this simile he establishes the image of water. Water is a symbol of hope for it gives life to all living things. Wambui gives life to Mbela by washing his clothes, shopping for him, cleaning his house and cooking his food. Water is a symbol of rebirth and renewal but the description, 'dripping' tap symbolizes Mbela's hopeless situation thus establishing an ironic twist of the image of water.

Unlike others, Wambui shelves her fears of contracting the virus from Mbela. Instead of adopting a scornful attitude, she chooses to stand by him. Mbela realizes that:

“Wambui was a trusted friend with whom to exchange ideas and seek guidance.” (99) Wambui is unlike Mbela’s two friends and colleagues he confides in immediately the doctor tells him of his condition. It is ironical that it is a stranger who becomes Mbela’s close ally while his friends engage in negative rumour about him.

Dr Nzomo is the only other person who visits Mbela’s house. He confidently greets and hugs Mbela without fear of contracting the disease. This can be contrasted to Mbela’s colleagues who are afraid to associate with him any more. Dr Nzomo tells Mbela of how his condition is related to Jenifa and encourages him: “Be strong. We shall get to the truth and justice will take its course.” (166) He does not condemn Mbela but instead he comforts him and promises to investigate the cause to his condition and should it be the hospital’s negligence then ‘justice would take its course’. The doctor symbolizes hope in the efficiency of medical staff. The author commends the doctor’s initiative in investigating the cause of Jenifa and now Mbela’s condition. The point the author is communicating to his readers is that doctors have a responsibility to conduct investigations on circumstances leading to certain infections. It is only by doing so that solutions are likely to be found. It is the doctor’s revelation that encourages Mbela to come out in the open and talk about his condition.

The author does not ‘kill’ Mbela at the end of the novel the way he kills all those who plan the bomb attack on the American embassy. He adopts a sympathetic attitude towards the HIV/AIDS victims but condemns those who participate in terrorism attacks and cause suffering to peaceful nations and people. The fact that Makwaru does not die shows that the author is in agreement with his decision to inform the American embassy of the planned bomb attack.

CONCLUSION

This study has been an analytical examination on Wahome Mutahi's thoughts as portrayed in his last two novels Doomsday and The House of Doom. It has pointed out the fact that Wahome Mutahi's works are quite contemporary in nature as he draws his ideas from some evidently known events within the Kenyan society. A good example being the happening of the 1998 bomb attack on the American embassy in Kenya and the current experience of HIV/AIDS patients. The study shows how Mutahi uses these experiences to bring out the themes of corruption, betrayal and hope.

The study has heavily depended on a stylistic and sociological approach. The use of biblical allusions, irony, stream of consciousness, symbolisms, imagery, euphemistic terms and even poetic structures and letter techniques have been pointed out and delineated to bring out Mutahi's message. The sociological approach has enhanced the author's portrayal of the experiences of a society in a specific geographical and social setting. This has further been supported by the Postcolonial approach that explains the emanating source of the issues affecting the contemporary society.

In the first chapter, a brief introduction on Mutahi's experiences that may have influenced him to write on the themes of betrayal and corruption precede the study. The chapter states the objectives of the study and explains the tenants of the theoretical framework that it adopts. A detailed literature review revealed that apart from Chris Wasike's academic research on Mutahi's Three Days on The Cross and The Jail Bug the rest of his other novels had not been studied at all. The chapter however points out that some of the ideas he portrays have received an academic

attention such as the issue of HIV/AIDS as studied by Wasamba in Oludhe's Chira and also as studied by Ndumba in Meja Mwangi's The last Plague

The second chapter has analysed the theme of disaster and society. It has pointed out terrorists' attacks and the scourge of HIV/AIDS as disaster issues Mutahi treats in the two novels. The chapter has discussed the issue of time and place in relation to the titles of the novels. Doomsday signifies the concept of time while The House Doom symbolizes the concept of place. The chapter illustrates the postcolonial and contemporary concepts of time. Although the place concept is Third World; it emerges that the issues in question cannot be confined to any one specific region and thus the universality of the place concept. The conflict between the East and the West and Africa being their battleground has also been discussed. The idea of fear of HIV/AIDS virus and of its victim is discussed. The fear of terrorists' attacks is pointed out and elaborated on. HIV/AIDS and terrorism are discussed as tragic experiences that cause death, physical and psychological torment to many people.

In the third chapter we discussed the use of euphemisms to portray the spectre of corruption. In this chapter euphemism is pointed out as a style Mutahi purposely adopts to portray corruption within the Kenyan society. The sociological roots of the euphemisms reflect the Kenyan society and this explains the contextual setting of the novels. Corruption is discussed from different points of views by the explanations of various euphemistic terms such as 'tea', 'eat', 'empty stomach', 'tall relatives', 'something', 'good connections', and others. The vicious circle of corruption and the fact that it is well manifested in the elite in the society are brought out.

In chapter four we discussed how specific characters and situations symbolize the ideas of betrayal and hope. Mbela's treacherous behaviour towards his friend Kamako is contrasted and compared to Mbela's friends, colleagues and the family betrayal after he acquires the HIV/AIDS virus. His change of attitude to come out in the open and talk about his condition is discussed as a sign of hope. Santole symbolizes husbands who betray their families and trick young girls like Wambui. The effects of betrayal are discussed in relation to Kamako, Wambui and also Mbela. Wambui and Dr Nzomo are discussed as symbols of hope to HIV/AIDS victims and the society in general. The study expands the theme of betrayal by symbolizing bomb blast characters such as the American marines, Lukulo and colonel Hyde. The issue of hope is portrayed through characters such as Private Disney, Dr Susan, Dr Miheso and also the crowd that is so eager to see life being saved. While those who succumb to this cruel event are seen as the victims of betrayal, those who live through it such as Pauline and the American ambassador are seen as symbols of a hopeful society.

This study has just opened additional avenues for further studies on Wahome Mutahi's works. For example a study could be conducted on how the use of flashbacks in the development of his plots back up his ideas. Secondly, a study could also be carried out on the author's fondness of 'purpose' characters. These are the many character he just introduces in his works to achieve a specific goal. The role of such characters in his works can form a good study topic. Thirdly, a study may be carried on how and why Wahome Mutahi coins neologisms from his surrounding and why some of his characters are given names that are analogous to their behaviour. All in all this study revealed the fact that Wahome Mutahi's works are embedded with many literary features that cannot be ignored.

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