PUBLIC POLICY CHALLENGES IN TANZANIA AS PORTRAYED IN SWAHILI WRITTEN LITERATURE[1*]

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Abstract

Tanzania has experienced significant policy changes in more than 50 years since independence. In the 1960s, after independence, Tanzania adopted Ujamaa, which aimed at uniting her citizens by eradicating exploitation among people. However, the policy eventually proved economically unsuccessful. Reasons for the downfall of Ujamaa include mismanagement of the public institutions and public funds embezzlements by state officials. This policy was followed by liberalisation policies which led the government to entrust public means of production to individuals. Like historical sources, the *literary world has its own ways of discussing such matters. This paper seeks to discuss how such policies surface in Swahili written literature by expounding views for each policy.*

1.0 Introduction

Analysing literary works while taking into account cultural and historical contexts makes it easier for readers to make sense of historical phenomenon (Beaty, Booth, Hunter, & Mays, 2002). This coincides with the Marxists' argument that a literary work has to be analysed based on cultural and historical contexts (Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker, 2005). In much the same way, to appreciate Swahili literature, one has to necessarily place it onto a historical and cultural context of the Swahili world (Mulokozi, 1992). Analysing specifically why Swahili writers write, Farouk Topan holds the same opinion (Topan, 2006).

This paper critically analyses the covert subject matter of literary works to basic Marxist themes. It draws from Barry (2002) to explain the literary work in terms of the social period which 'produced' it. Furthermore, the article relates the literary work to the context in which it was read. The aim is to demonstrate that literary writers are partly incited by the geopolitical and macroeconomic affairs in their historical and contemporary times. In his introductory note, Ngalimecha Ngahyoma, the playwright of *Kijiji Chetu* ("Our Village", 1975) underscores the idea that literary writers must cope with the speed of changes that takes place in the country, otherwise, they will end up writing historical texts (Ngahyoma, 1975). Scholars such as (Khamis, 2005; Mulokozi, 1992; Kruisheer, 1999; Wamitila, 1999; Topan, 2006; Mrikaria,

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2010) affirm that Tanzanian literary writers have taken political issues as one of the major concerns in their creative works. The paper is organized as follows: the first section puts into context the policies adopted in Tanzania that have brought about profound effects in the country in terms of provoking Swahili writers. This section is followed by the analytical approach and methods employed in the analysis of the selected literary works[2]. I further explain the criteria used to select various quotes and sections of texts that offer evidence for this paper. Finally, the paper focuses on Ujamaa and Self-reliance, a policy that emerged immediately after independence in the 1960s vis-à-vis the political liberalisation that emerged in the 1990s.

2.0 Analytical Approach

This paper makes general use of Marxism theory to examine how literary writers in Tanzania from the 1960s to date draw on policies and historical political developments as subjects of their literary criticism. It examines how writers make use of Marxism and Historical Realism as a writing style or sub-genre of realistic fiction centred on historical events and time periods. Therefore, a careful selection of texts was done based on their engagement with two historical moments and two political policies that shaped these times and used them as object and theme. The first historical time has been called by historians as the Ujamaa era which characterized Tanzanian politics between the 1960s and 1990s. The central political discourse during this time was the Ujaama and self-reliance policies. The second historical period and the political policies that characterized it are referred to as free market and liberalisation period. This period confounded with the other historical time but it roughly dated from 1995 on to the present times.

Accordingly, Swahili fiction books were selected mainly based on their thematic reflection on either Ujamaa or free market and liberalisation policies. Although publication dates are significant in determining the time covered by a book, they remain highly slippery because writing and publishing processes are very unpredictable.[3] I distinguish the themes of the texts by examining whether they attempted to positively or negatively appraise the policies in the historical era in question. This is done to show the complexity and diversity in views that literary artists harboured.

2 Literary works come in different genres. For this paper, I only selected published plays, novels, and anthologies of poems and short stories. I focus on publications which were produced by Tanzanian or Kenyan writers. I am cognizant that there is strong difference between and among these genres in their literary style. However, I am compelled here to analyze them together because they all engage with historical realism.

3 In conversations with some Swahili fiction writers at different times such as F.E.M.K. Senkoro, M.M. Mulokozi, E. Mbogo, and K.K. Kahigi, it was revealed that writing and publishing processes may take several years, sometimes a manuscript may take ten years in the publishing house.

3.0 Policies Adopted in Tanzania

In the context of its independence, Tanzania adopted two antagonistic policies. Ujamaa *was a political philosophy* linked with socialist policies. This was in contrast to free market and liberalisation policies as the key tenets of capitalism. Ujamaa policy was a manifesto of the *Arusha Declaration.* This policy transformed the ownership of major means of production and pronounced equality among the people. The declaration was mother to other policies in all sectors of the economy. One of the major Ujamaa policies was *villagization,* which involved massive relocation of people in rural areas to designated locations where they would be easily provided with social services. People were also encouraged to engage in agricultural activities so as to curb rural exodus and subsequently avoid the likelihood of vagrancy in urban areas. Ujamaa and *Villagisation* received enormous support because they seemed like the ideal choice in contrast to the colonialist policies that alienated land from the people. The most favourable policy alternative was the free market and liberalisation policies*,* which operated in conjunction with *privatization*. Yet even with this new alternative, it did not take long for 'liberalized' Tanzanians to realize that they had become passengers on a wrong vessel. I now turn the discussion to how literary authors writing in Kiswahili engaged these policy developments as a subject of critique in their works. I begin by examining the post-independence optimism and the pessimistic outlook that soon followed.

3.1 Literary Reaction to National Independence

Ujamaa was adopted only a few years after independence. In this particular time, written literary genres of all types were dominated by the bliss of freedom. Based on the analysis of literary works, it seemed like everyone was happy to live in a free country. In fact, poetic works were more dominant at this time than literary works of any other genre. A good number of poems rejoiced over independence as if the storm was over. The jubilations overshadowed the critic in the literary artistry. Included in this group are a famous poet Saadan Kandoro (1972).

3.2 Ujamaa and Self Reliance Policy

The implementation of Ujamaa is one of the greatest events which shaped written literature in Tanzania. The social commentary by playwrights and poets show that the post-independence euphoria was brief. Writers soon started to show that political independence had no economic significance to the majority of the people. In their works, they started to invite a need for an institution of a system that would benefit

all people as the previous system seemed to benefit only a small group of people, especially the affluent. *Mwanzo wa Tufani* Kahigi and Ngemera, (1976) was a good example. These works show how people were brutalized and exploited in the private sector by what came to be termed as "kupe" – *a tick or a bloodsucker*. Unable to cope with such cruel acts, the employees finally kick out their employer – a businessman. The playwrights imply that it was necessary to formulate policies that would ensure equality and condemn all oppressive practices. At this time, given the local socio-political and global world politics, it was Ujamaa. This is one of the policies that for the first time since the attainment of political independence led authors to hold different opinions detailed below.

3.3 Antagonism towards the Ujamaa

Following the disappointment of the oppressive post-independence situation, some Tanganyikans endorsed Ujamaa as the solution. Although the majority were optimistic about Ujamaa, the idea did not come smoothly. It did not receive enough support from some of the state officials and citizens who owned major means of production. State officials did not accept the idea because they had links to feudal lords and capitalists who were commonly known as "kupe". Above all, given the socio-political and economic strength they had, they were too likely to be the next class of petty bourgeoisie.

People were tired of sweet statements from persons they knew to be exploiters. Capitalists and feudal lords were regarded as exploiters; so, anyone befitting the people's definition of capitalist or feudal lord was as good as a *bloodsucker*, a thief so to speak. This notion is very pervasive in the poems of the time. A good example is *Mashairi ya Azimio la Arusha* (Arusha Declaration Poems, 1971) edited by (Topan and Kamenju, 1971).

Briefly, the policy made the poor to believe that Tanzania would be a country which everyone would aspire to live in, a country free of exploitation. Therefore, as the majority of citizens and some state officials enjoyed the adoption of the policy, a good number of the government officials who had been part of those who rejoiced the post-independence socio-political and economic situation never supported the idea because Ujamaa threatened their economic wellbeing. Nyerere, the then president and engineer of Ujamaa in Tanganyika, had known clearly the two antagonistic sides (Nyerere, 1973).

3.4 Politicization of Ujamaa

Literary authors were among the people who championed the idea of Ujamaa. One among the forms of poetry that publicized Ujamaa is *Ngonjera*, initially composed by

Mathias Mnyampala. This kind of poetry spread all over the country with Ujamaa as its major subject. It is dialogic poetry which involves the antagonist and protagonist debating about a motion, mainly at this time was Ujamaa. Expectedly, the dialogue ends by the antagonist admitting little knowledge of the subject matter, and often the antagonist promises to educate others about the matter. Two series of such poems by Mnyampala were published (Mnyampala, 1970, 1971).

3.5 Criticisms of Ujamaa and Its Implementation

A few years after the introduction of Ujamaa, there emerged literary critics who started to challenge its implementation. Their works attacked Ujamaa openly, advancing the view that Ujamaa and the Arusha Declaration were an umbrella under which politicians and crooked state officials took underserved shelter. A good number of nationalized means of production had fallen in the hands of a few groups of people whose major aim was to replace the white, former colonizers. These people began misusing resources by operating industries and other government resources based on nepotism, tribalism and cronyism. As a result, the nation shifted the focus from *technological-know-how* to the infamous *technological-know-who*. Consequently, many parastatals, industries and factories operated inefficiently, leading to underproduction. This new group of critics emerged in all literary genres, namely poetry, novel and drama. According to Khamis (2007), this group of authors did not support the parroting of the Arusha Declaration and its policies.

Kezilahabi, for instance, criticized the implementation and much worse the operationalization of Ujamaa in all the three literary genres, namely poetry, novel and play, though he welcomed the Ujamaa idea (cf. 1989). In the play *Kaptula la Marx* (Kezilahabi, 1999), Kezilahabi satirizes Nyerere for forcing himself to wear Karl Marx's shorts, which do not fit him. Other state officials gaze at their leader in disbelief as they too make their shorts too big for their waists. It could also be said that the majority of state officials did not have a clear understanding of the contents of Ujamaa. The citizenry believed that they would live in the exploitation of free and classless society. That remained a day-dream; things did not materialize. On this, Kezilahabi ridicules the government for not working to meet the people's expectations. The playwright mocks the government's manipulation of the policy (cf. (Mrikaria, 2010). The playwright presents the leader, 'Bachelor President', the architect of the policy and a peasant as the only people who lived with Ujamaa accordingly, but president's close followers - ministers and members of parliament and other governmental officials – practised the policy hypocritically, doing no effort to make the policy a success. Other Kezilahabi's literary works that depict a similar theme are *Gamba la Nyoka* (Kezilahabi, 1979), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (Kezilahabi, 1975) and some poems.

The same idea surfaces in the drama, *Bwana Mkubwa* (Mbonde, 1974). The playwright depicts a contradiction that existed among state officials. While they all publicly vowed to eradicate corruption, some of them were corrupt and used their positions to take bribes from wealthy businessmen. Some of these scandals were eye-witnessed by patriotic civil servants who were eager to see changes take place. This is a reflection of dissatisfaction of the citizenry towards their leaders during the operationalization of Ujamaa. In the poem "Azimio" (Declaration) found in *Karibu Ndani* (Kezilahabi, 1988), Kezilahabi mocks the Arusha Declaration likening it to a dysfunctional system. In this poem, Kezilahabi sees the Arusha Declaration as something that has brought nothing significant. People had hopes in it but no one realized the dreams. He goes further to liken the declaration with heavy dust left-back by cattle, meaning that it is something that is not only insignificant but something that is likely to harm people by blinding them. In other words, he looks at the Arusha Declaration as something that needs to be wiped off so that people can start afresh. Finally, he says that *what remains after the Arusha Declaration are finger millet grains that have been spread out by a blind farmer*, meaning that what is evident now is that the Arusha Declaration was a program that was carried out by short-sighted people.

Penina Mhando, in *Lina Ubani* (Mhando, 1984), discusses in general terms the effects of Ujamaa. She observes that most decisions made by the state aimed at nourishing the state officials' life. However, this plan did not last long because after a short while, scales started to fall off from people's eyes and people realised that there was a huge gap that separated state officials and the citizenry. Ordinary citizens came to realise that they were not sailing on the same boat with their rulers and that the beautiful song of unity from politicians' mouths was boring stage performances. In the play, Mwanahego, a drunkard character, discusses with a voice that comes to his ears. Although the author does not explicitly identify the speaker, the tone implies that the voice represents government officials' contradictory speeches. Artistic use of the drunkard character may imply the inability of the sober people to air out their views openly due to cowardice. Other literary works that portray the same theme include Ruhumbika's *Miradi Bubu ya Wazalendo* (Ruhumbika, 1995), Chachage's *Sudi ya Yohana* (Chachage, 1981) and Liwenga's *Nyota ya Huzuni* (Liwenga, 1981).

In a nutshell, Ujamaa as a manifesto of the Arusha Declaration, based on the written literary works' views reviewed, had a miserable end. Although the majority of the people put much hope in it as a result of the confidence they had in Mwalimu Nyerere who did his best to walk the talk, they were let down by the other officials who tried to make everyone within the sound of their voice believe that Ujamaa was

workable, but doing nothing to make Ujamaa a reality. However, literary criticism came from only a handful of authors while the majority, especially poets, promoted Ujamaa as the panacea.

3.6 Politicization and Implementation of Villagisation Policy

Ujamaa was followed immediately by Villagisation policy. The policy aimed at gathering scattered communities into nucleated villages so as to supply them with social services such as schools, clinics, water, and where possible, electricity. Again, in this period, literary works supported the idea by convincing people to come together and form bigger communities in rural areas to access basic social services. The policy motivated people to go back to rural areas where they could engage in agricultural activities instead of 'loitering' in urban areas. Many literary works written at this particular time showed that life in rural areas was better than in urban areas. They invented an artificial urban dystopia. They showed that people, especially the youth, who lived in urban areas suffered from not only unemployment but also from lack of morality. A number of literary works sought to demonstrate the wisdom of returning to the village. They portrayed the village life as fulfilling: ample space for well-built homes, a surplus of food for every meal, and productive work. In these works, Ujamaa had fostered cooperative, egalitarian utopia. Whether or not this was a kind of life one could witness in rural areas, it is a question that remains unanswered.

These ideas were also a subject among the Swahili literary writers who started to publicise them through literary readership. For example, Mhina's novel *Mtu ni Utu* (Mhina, 1980) provides an account of a man called Semezozi who mistreats his nephew Sozi, till the child runs away from his uncle's mistreatment to seek refuge in Diswa village where Ujamaa is a way of life. Sozi lives a happy life in Diswa and gets married to a beautiful woman. The author suggests that an Ujamaa society is a fraternal alternative to the present. Semesozi is made to represent exploiters and dictators in society, and he is portrayed as someone who acts inhumanly. The only solution to these problems, implied by the author, was adopting Ujamaa as instituted by the Arusha Declaration. In their analysis of this novel, Sengo and Kiango (1973) argue that even the name 'mjomba' - maternal uncle - is used to convey unwanted habits of Semesozi, because in Kiswahili, a paternal uncle is called 'baba mkubwa' or 'baba mdogo' for older and younger uncle respectively. However, the author used the name 'mjomba' to show that Samesozi does not deserve to be called paternal (older or younger) uncle. The assumption is that a paternal relative is closer than a maternal relative because the majority of Tanzanian societies are patrilineal. Briefly, Ujamaa villages were described and drawn in the utopian disposition.

Another book which supported and championed this idea is Mbogo's drama *Giza Limeingia* (Mbogo, 1980), which discusses problems faced by young people in urban areas. These people suffer from unemployment because they do not have money to bribe their would-be employers. Some opt for theft, and young ladies offer sexual bribery in expectation of getting employed. All this happens at these young people's peril. Young men risk their lives and women end up contracting sexually transmitted diseases which they are unable to treat them because they cannot afford cover medical expenses. Poets as usual composed a number of poems underscoring the same idea such as Mazua's poem "Sisitiza Vijijini" (Emphasize on Villages) found in the collection of poems *Diwani Yetu* (Mlingwa, 1970).

On the other hand, some authors viewed both urban and rural areas critically. A novel *Shida* by Balisidya shows that life in urban areas is not all that easy and that young people should not leave rural areas for vague hopes in urban areas. At the same time, the author notes that life in rural areas is even worse, that is why young people flee to urban areas. For instance, in one of the incidences, a girl called Matika, a protagonist of the novel, flees to town and stays there for five years. When she comes back to the village, she finds that her fellow villagers look more miserable than they were when she left five years ago. The author says,

> Matika aliwatambua wengi wao lakini wao hawakumtambua mgeni 'mtoka mbali'. Ngozi zao zilisinyaa na kusawajika zaidi kwa ajili ya kazi na hali ya taabu za umaskini wa miaka mingi. Matika alitamani kulia; alitaka kucheka. (p. 6)
>
> Matika recognized many of them but they did not recognize her 'a stranger' from a distant place. Their skins were more wrinkled and marred due to hard work and the poverty they had been facing for many years. Matika felt like crying; she felt like laughing.

Agricultural activities which young people were encouraged to engage in were not at all promising. The majority of peasants carried out agricultural activities using crude tools, mainly a hand hoe. In spite of difficulties, while performing farm activities, they, unfortunately, did not make returns since crops were sold at very low prices while farm inputs were expensive. This is the main reason that made young people look for an alternative life in urban areas.

3.7 Criticisms of the Implementation of Villagisation Policy

Only a few citizens understood the essence of Ujamaa. Owing to this situation, implementation of the policy left adverse effects in rural areas where Ujamaa villages were formed. The majority of leaders, who normally acted as demigods, abused people physically and emotionally in many ways. In the process of gathering and ushering people into Ujamaa villages, those who resisted were brutalized. The

results of such brutality left some people wounded, crippled for life and others dead. In this process, many people lost their belongings such as harvested and unyielded farm crops, livestock and tools. In other words, people were harmed physically and psychologically. Briefly, people were not well informed, and it was unfortunate that force was used as the only tool to achieve the government's goal. Several Swahili literary authors revealed the unpleasant nature of this exercise as presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

In the novel *Gamba la Nyoka* (Kezilahabi, 1979), Kezilahabi highlights the use of force by the state in attempts to gather people in selected Ujamaa villages. The decision generated serious friction between villagers and the government, resulting in explosions of warfare between them. For example, the author notes,

> Ilikuwa asubuhi hii malori matatu yaliyokuwa yamejaa watu... Walikuwa wanamgambo... Kila mmoja wao alikuwa ameshika gongo mkononi, isipokuwa viongozi wachache waliokuwa na bunduki. (p. 21)
>
> ... walistukia mishale inawamgwagikia mabegani kama mvua. Mishale mingine iliwapiga tumboni na vichwani. (p.23)
>
> It was in the morning when three lorries full of people... They were auxiliary soldiers... Each one of them had a thick heavy stick in his hand, except a few leaders who had guns in their hands. ... all of a sudden a rain of arrows started falling on their shoulders. Other arrows hit their abdomens and heads.

In *Njozi Iliyopotea* (Mung'ong'o, 1980), Mung'ong'o outlines similar experiences during the implementation of Ujamaa. He is also of the view that the implementation of Ujamaa had provoked a warfare state. The cruelty associated with the implementation of the policy suppressed the dream of a very promising policy in which each one would be not only considered but treated as a brother or sister; the essential meaning of the word "ndugu". A comprehensive analysis of the novel regarding the matter is also detailed by Topan (2006).

Kezilahabi (1979) and Mung'ong'o (1980) give a glimpse idea about how soldiers brutally evacuated people from their villages and societies to meet Ujamaa political demands. Auxiliary soldiers destroyed belongings and crops because people could not leave their properties to disappear while they were not sure how they would live in the "new world". All belongings were vandalized purposely to make sure that the areas where people lived became completely inhabitable.

Government officials would not stop at anything. They were ready to destroy anything and terrorize anyone who did not show readiness to join Ujamaa villages.

The militiamen almost made lynching a habit. The implementation of this policy did not take into consideration cultural and spiritual relations people had with the land they inhabited. Mung'ong'o (1980) also brings forward some possible reasons that made people reluctant to relocate. This is exemplified below by one of the characters in the book:

> Wengine huko wanakolima ni ardhi waliyorithi toka kwa mababu zao; wanaiheshimu kama mirathi ipasavyo kuheshimiwa. Itakuwa vigumu wao kuondoka na kuiacha (p.117)
>
> Some people are cultivating on pieces of land which they inherited from their ancestors; they pay respect and treat it accordingly. It will be difficult for them to go away and abandon them.

The author observes that Ujamaa was an idea from the top going down for implementation. The people, who are the main actors, were just being used as instruments to meet demands and obey orders from the top. They were not given an opportunity to air their views on the best ways to form Ujamaa villages. In addition, the majority were still thinking within clan boundaries, that is why it was difficult for them to leave the places they traditionally owned and join Ujamaa villages where they would stay on common pieces of land.

However, Kezilahabi (1979) is of the opinion that if all stakeholders had the same spirit and good understanding of the policy and above all good leaders, the results would not have been as upsetting as they were. As one of the characters comments on Ujamaa villages:

> Ni kweli zamani nilikuwa na wasiwasi juu ya siasa yetu mpya. ... Ujamaa niliuona kama mafuriko, nami ilinibidi nisubiri kwenye jiwe. Sasa naona mafuriko yamekwisha. Subira wakati mwingine huvuta heri. (p. 34).
>
> It's true formerly I was doubtful of our new policy. ... I saw Ujamaa as a flood, I had to wait aside. Now I see the flood is over. Sometimes patience is a virtue.

For the author, Ujamaa as a policy was not a problem but it was poorly implemented. After pulling off the task of gathering people, other challenges emerged in the newly formed villages. Realizing the opposition against Ujamaa in its early days, Hussein (1969) shares Kezilahabi's idea in a different angle. For Hussein, the idea of liberating the country cannot be intrinsically bad. The Ujamaa policy and *Kinjekitile* had inherently good intentions, to unshackle the society from oppression and exploitation from a few groups of people (Mulokozi and Kitogo, 2009).

3.8 Challenges Facing Ujamaa Villages

As expected by some people, life in Ujamaa villages was not simple. A limited supply of social services was one of the biggest problems. These villages were also characterized by poor leadership, self-centredness, and laziness. In the play *Kijiji*

Chetu (Ngahyoma, 1975), Ngahyoma shows that government and party officials in rural areas oppressed people and acted as demigods. The play also suggests that it was not the citizenry alone that did not have a clear understanding of Ujamaa. Leaders too were not aware of what Ujamaa really was. In the play, Kizito, one of the characters, puts it as follows:

> KIZITO: ... Mtazame mwenyekiti wa kijiji. Utasema kweli ni mjamaa? Ana duka, kuku, vyote vyamletea utajiri juu ya utajiri! ... Mwalimu mkuu hawatumii watoto wa shule wa kijiji kwa kumlimia shamba lake? Bado kuna ujamaa tu! Wenzetu wanachuma kwa kinga ya ujamaa kwa nini sisi tusifanye hivyo? (p. 30)
>
> KIZITO: Look at the village chairperson. Can you say that he is really a socialist (follower of Ujamaa)? He owns a shop, poultry, all of which make him richer and richer! ...Does the school head not use pupils to cultivate his farm? Can you say that Ujamaa is still active! Our colleagues rip off in the name of Ujamaa, why don't we do so too?

Ngahyoma (1975) observes that one of the main stumbling blocks of Ujamaa villages was gathering people in the villages without introducing the Ujamaa concept. In addition, Ngahyoma (1975) shows that, in Ujamaa villages, leaders stayed in the offices while they forced other people to work in Ujamaa farms. The playwright believes that state officials remained to play instructive roles assigning performative roles to the citizenry. In Kezilahabi's *Gamba la Nyoka* (Kezilahabi, 1979) more or less similar contradictions arise from the Ujamaa villages as it is evidenced by some people continuing to own their former belongings, making strangers feel completely rejected by the system. Government officials possessed much wealth without disclosing their sources of income, contrary to the true spirit of Ujamaa ideology. To conclude this section, I would say that Ujamaa villages faced challenges that could not be solved in time, leading to loss of hope by the majority of the people and to the eventual demise of the policy.

3.9 Failure of Ujamaa

After a period of trial and error, Ujamaa proved a failure. People knew that it could no longer improve their lives and take the dreamed nation to self-reliance due to high levels of corruption, laziness and self-centredness among state officials. The Kagera War between Tanzania and Uganda worsened the economic situation, making Ujamaa very unpopular. The post-war period witnessed economic hardship, which according to literary critics, led to Nyerere's resignation as a sign of admitting failure. Post-war hardships exposed economic decline under Ujamaa; price fluctuations at the world market and the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programs by IMF and the World Bank made matters increasingly worse (Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003). Other writers such as Muhammed Seif Khatib think that the collapse of Ujamaa was engineered by some state officials. Following its non-exploitative elements, Ujamaa

created a group of anti-Ujamaa movement from various areas whose motive was to see it collapse. It was such anti-Ujamaa movements in the government which manoeuvred it to its demise. In the poem "Ujamaa" in his collection of poems *Fungate ya Uhuru* (Khatib, 1988), Khatib maintains that 'unscrupulous' people who detested it put Ujamaa to an end. Among them are government officials who defamed the policy publicly and during their meetings. They used their power to move the government away from the tenets of the Arusha Declaration. According to many authors, enemies of Ujamaa succeeded as Ujamaa's life ended gradually. After the resignation of Mwalimu Nyerere in 1985, the policy continued to exist only as a national policy in the texts, as free market and liberalisation were slowly coming to replace the Ujamaa. Thus far, the issues regarding Ujamaa and free market and liberalisation policies are contentious. The national constitution of Tanzania still recognizes Ujamaa and self-reliance as the national policy while all signs show that the government fosters the implementation of a free market economy as a de facto national policy, which is among the key tenets of capitalism. The collapse of Ujamaa ushered in a new period of policies and macroeconomic conditions. As was the case with the Ujamaa period, these new conditions became a subject, theme and object of literary criticism in Tanzania. I now turn to examine how free market and liberalisation policies were presented in literary works.

4.0 Free Market, Liberalisation Policies and Their Critics

Elements of free market and liberalisation policies in Tanzania started to be evident when the government began promoting privatization. The policies allowed people to own large pieces of land, parastatals, mines, and businesses in the transportation sector. Free market and liberalisation policies began in earnest during the reign of Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Mwalimu Nyerere's successor, who served two terms consecutively, from 1985 to 1995. This was the transformation period which witnessed the falling apart of the main pillars of Ujamaa, including the most debated issue of a code of conduct for public leadership. Eradicating these codes gave liberty to leaders who had previously been forbidden to do business and own wealth. They were unchained from those economic shackles and thereby they could do all those "prohibited activities" freely. This had far-reaching effects, especially in the transition from Ujamaa to the liberalized form of economy. It is a period in which Tanzania made an abrupt shift from a state-controlled economy to a mode of the economy which was largely controlled by the private sector (Tsubura, 2018). All major means of production were entrusted to private individuals, contrary to the Ujamaa ideals. Free market and liberalisation policies were almost fully operationalised during the tenures of Benjamin Mkapa and Jakaya Kikwete in the third phase presidency 1995 – 2005, and fourth phase presidency 2005-2015, respectively.

Since Mkapa's term, the nation witnessed the mushrooming of private companies and the maximum influx of transnational and multinational companies seizing big pieces of land with the support of government forces. This includes areas in which people had been dwelling since time immemorial. Gold, diamond and Tanzanite mines were owned and operated by private companies. The government ceased to support agriculture which the majority of Tanzanians depended and still depend on. This is evidenced by the disappearance of farmers' cooperatives. As a result, peasants who have practically very low bargaining power in selling their crops became victims of unfair contracts signed with brokers. Most of these challenges are portrayed in Swahili written literature as exemplified below.

Since its onset, free market and liberalisation policies had not received much public support, in comparison to Ujamaa. The majority were doubtful about its implementation, having seen what had happened in their neighbouring societies like Kenya as portrayed in Thiong'o and Mirii's (1982) *Nitaolewa Nikipenda* – "I will Marry When I want" and *This Time Tomorrow* by Thiong'o (1982). These literary works glimpse the Kenya's experience on similar matters concerning land. People were hesitant because the initial stages of the implementation of free market and liberalisation policies had immediately shown negative effects at their detrimental. Public social services such as health and education were no longer offered freely. It is a time when people witness political leaders and government officials growing rich overnight. Kezilahabi talks about this in the poem *Dhifa*, found in his poem collection *Dhifa* (Kezilahabi, 2008).

Dhifa	Feast
Ni chakula cha mchana:	It is lunch:
Walanchi wameshafika:	Nation exploiters have arrived:
Wazungu, Wahindi, Waarabu	Whites, Indians, Arabs
Weshateka sehemu zao.	Have seized their seats.
Chakula ki mezani.	The food is on the table.
Ni dhifa.	It is a feast.

In this poem, Kezilahabi describes how leaders who side with other people "investors" from within and outside the country plunder the nation's resources for their personal benefits. Actually, before Ujamaa this was the case. According to Kezilahabi, state officials such as ministers, members of parliament, and journalists have been corrupted by their new business dealings. People who identify themselves as enthusiastic patriots remain silent. Kezilahabi urges people to make their leaders accountable. Similar discontents are found in other poets such as Haule (2011). In the poem "Ruhusa" (Permission) found in his collection of poems, *Uliza Tu* "Just Ask" (Haule, 2011), he irately and sarcastically satirises the government as he says:

Ruhusa	Permission
Mashamba yetu uzeni, madini yetu uzeni,	Sell our farms, sell our minerals,
Gaweni mbuga uzeni, na maji yetu gaweni,	Give out our reserves and water freely,
Vijumba vyetu uzeni, milango yetu gaweni,	Sell our small houses, give out our doors freely,
Uzeni tena uzeni, gaweni tu tena gaweni. (p. 56)	Sell and sell again, just give them out freely.

Again, the government is attacked for selling the nation's resources at cheap prices. Sometimes, citizens who own land are tricked by the people of higher position in the government such as regional and district commissioners. Government officials, whose dealings with investors are frequently done undercover, deceive citizens, particularly in the rural areas. The links between government officials and large multinational corporations create an exploitative system which is even harder to deal with. Poor people in urban and rural areas are the main victims of the new policy. Chachage in *Makuadi wa Soko Huria* (Chachage, 2002) exposes grand and sophisticated corruption in the free market involving government officials and "investors". This is exemplified when one of the characters in the novel says:

> "Watu hawa wana hila, wao pamoja na wale viongozi wa wilaya wamekuwa wakija huku na kuwahonga watu, wamekuwa wakifanya kampeni zao kisirisiri za kuwataka watu waukubali mradi. …" (p. 156)
>
> "These people are tricky, they cooperate with district officials coming here to bribe the people, and they have been campaigning secretly, persuading the people to accept the project. …"

Government officials are blamed for siding with the "investors", who were called *kupe –bloodsuckers* in the 1960s to the 1980s, to exploit the country's resources. They are also attacked for entrusting everything to the private sector, including key enterprises such as financial, transportation and mining sectors. As a result of such laxity, the private sector can operate important sectors without close supervision from the government. Within this operation, employees are exploited, and can be fired by their bosses illegally, just as they did before Ujamaa was adopted in Tanzania in 1967 (refer to *Mwanzo wa Tufani* by (Kahigi & Ngemera, 1976).

In implementing Villagisation policy as part of Ujamaa, people from various places were relocated to Ujamaa villages. In the much the same way, during the implementation of free market and liberalisation policies, people are dispossessed of their land and displaced after their land has been sold to investors. The only difference is that during the operationalisation of Villagisation policy, people were relocated to Ujamaa villages while land dispossession under free market and liberalisation policies does not offer an alternative. Consequently, people stop doing their daily economic activities and start wandering looking for land to settle and carry out

economic activities as exemplified by Nyoni in his play *Mabepari wa Bongo* (Nyoni, 2007) as one of the characters laments,

> … Alikwishatuua zamani, mimi, mama yake mzazi na hata ndugu zake, pale alipokiuza kijiji chetu kwa wawekezaji. …Siwezi kuacha makaburi ya mababu na makazi yetu ya asili niende kutangatanga. … Siku moja tulikuwa tumelala walifika askari walivalia kivita haswa na kutuhamisha kwa mateke na magumi. Tukatoka nje na wakaanza kuchoma nyumba zetu huku tukiangalia, mali zetu zote zikiteketea na tukaambiwa tuondoke. …tukatokomea maporini ambako ndiko tunaishi, lakini hata huko tunasikia kumeuzwa na tunasubiri mwekezaji aje tu, ili tuondoke. Sijui tutakwenda wapi. (p.17).
>
> … He killed us long ago, her mother, his brothers and me when he sold our village to investors. … I cannot leave ancestors' tombs and our traditional home and go wandering elsewhere. … One day when we were asleep, there came soldiers dressed for war to evacuate us, kicking and beating us. We went out, they started burning our houses in front of us, all our belongings were consumed by fire, we were ordered to leave. …we went to the bush where we are living now, unfortunately, we are told that the area we are dwelling in has also been sold, and we are just waiting for the investor to come so that we can leave. We do not know where we will go.

Land dispossession witnessed during the implementation of free market and liberalisation policies never took into consideration people's traditional respected areas such as tombs and sacred places as they did during the implementation of Villagisation policies. Unlike the Villagisation policy in the 1970s, which intended to bring people together for the purpose of improving their wellbeing, in free market and liberalisation policies, the only thing the government knew was to evacuate people and leave them stranded - nowhere to go. In a nutshell, to some people, free market and liberalisation policies are very unpopular. An analysis of literary works written in Kiswahili conjures up a lot of implication in understanding the impact of the policies and the political systems.

5.0 Discussion

Historical realities shape the intellectual traditions just as the intellectual traditions shape the trajectory of nations. Although literature is often de-emphasized in favour of more technical education, a critical analysis of the themes in the reviewed works shows that literature is important because it helps readers develop critical thinking and discussion skills, build up new knowledge and experiences. What we see in the literary works in Kiswahili is a real attempt to make sense of the political realities shaping people's life in Tanzania. Literary writers in the periods which both examined policies urged citizens to overthrow irresponsible officials and hold them accountable for evils committed to society through their misconduct. Literary texts have always been an important tool for influencing political change.

The works reviewed also help to show the importance of Kiswahili language. As the influence of other literary traditions takes deep root in Tanzania, there is a need to

make visible the works produced in Kiswahili to preserve and continue the literary traditions.

6.0 Conclusion

It is true that policies shape and affect the lives of people and vice versa. After the failure of Ujamaa, the Tanzanian Government adopted free market and liberalisation policies as advised by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Some literary authors assume that free market and liberalisation policies were a package designed and implemented by superpowers to open channels to advance exploitative channels. As noted, both policies faced challenges though the Government has still wide opportunities to improve liberalisation policies for the betterment of the Tanzanian society.

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