

POLITICS AND THEATRE IN TANZANIA
AFTER THE ARUSHA DECLARATION, 1967-1984

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A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THE UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

1985

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the practice of theatre in Tanzania after the Arusha Declaration of 1967. The Arusha Declaration as Tanzania's blueprint for socialist transformation ushered in an era in which economic and political attempts were made to direct the country towards Ujamaa and away from capitalist structures and development. The social reality of the period has been dominated by the articulation between the attempts for the socialist transformation and the historical political factors supporting or undermining the transformation. This thesis discusses contemporary Tanzanian theatre within the framework of the political events and social reality after 1967. There are six chapters in the thesis. Chapter 1 provides the historical background of contemporary Tanzanian theatre. It includes an examination of traditional theatre performances within and outside the colonial experience as well as the historical role of Kiswahili as a chosen language of theatre communication. Chapter 2 looks into the Arusha Declaration, its tenets, objectives, some aspects of its effects on social practices and the theoretical responses regarding the role of an art form such as theatre within Ujamaa. A discussion on the works of Tanzania's leading playwright, Ebrahim Hussein, is the concern of Chapter 3. Chapter 4 examines plays and performances by the other theatre practitioners of the period. Official policies and the practice of theatre in state institutions are described in Chapter 5 and the last Chapter covers the development of theatre for social development as well as the nature of theatre control and censorship in the period under investigation. What emerges from these discussions is theatre practice which has been greatly informed by the political events, attitudes, policies and available aesthetic vocabulary of the period.

The material upon which the discussion in this thesis is based has been obtained from field research, interviews, questionnaires, archival sources, information from theatre practitioners and cultural activists as well as published plays and theatre material. It is hoped that the thesis provides an understanding of the development and practice of theatre within the specific political and social conditions such as Tanzania's since 1967.

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Acknowledgements

I am indebted to many people and institutions whose generosity, material and moral support have contributed much to the development and completion of this work.

I owe much gratitude to my supervisor, Martin Banham, without whose academic guidance, valuable suggestions, criticisms, encouragement, moral and material support this thesis would not have been possible.

My grateful thanks to the British Council for financing this study and to the University of Leeds and the University of Dar-es-Salaam for the research grants which allowed me to do field work for this thesis.

My thanks also to the Workshop Theatre, University of Leeds; the Department of Art, Music and Theatre, University of Dar-es-Salaam, and the staff and students of these departments for their help and support throughout the period of study.

I owe much to the institutions, villages and individuals who agreed to be interviewed, provide information and material; amongst these are the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of National Education, Butimba College of National Education, the Party Headquarters, Radio Tanzania Dar-es-Salaam, the villagers of Malya and Mtego wa Simba and the following individuals: Abdilatif Abdalla, E. Chambulikazi, S. Ishemo, Bruce and Jamila King, Mzee D. Kombani, Agnes Mandanda, Dr P.O. Mlama and M. Chikawe who held my hand even across the seas.

I am also grateful to Mrs A. Torode for typing this thesis and for her professional advice.

Abbreviations Commonly Used

AD , Arusha	-	The Arusha Declaration
ASP	-	The Afro Shirazi Party
CCM	-	Chama cha Mapinduzi
CT	-	Cultural Troupe
CUP	-	Cambridge University Press
DSM	-	Dar-es-Salaam
DUP	-	Dar-es-Salaam University Press
EALB	-	East African Literature Bureau
EAPH	-	East African Publishing House
GP	-	Government Press
NDT	-	National Drama Troupe
OUP	-	Oxford University Press
Paukwa	-	Paukwa Theatre Group/Association
RTD	-	Radio Tanzania Dar-es-Salaam
TANU	-	Tanganyika African National Union
TG	-	Theatre Group
TNA	-	Tanzania National Archives
TPH	-	Tanzania Publishing House
TSD	-	Theatre for Social Development
UDSM	-	University of Dar-es-Salaam

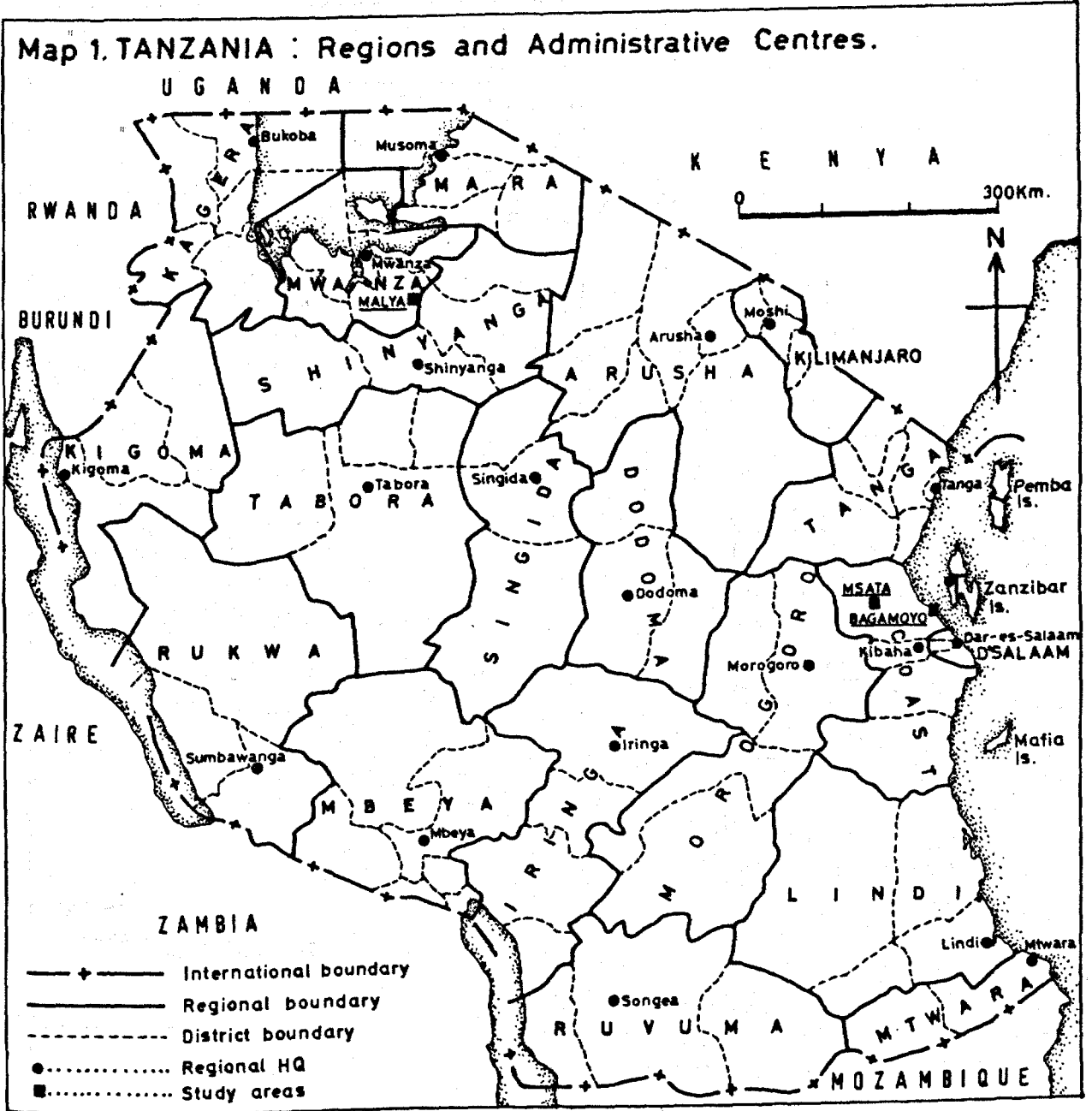
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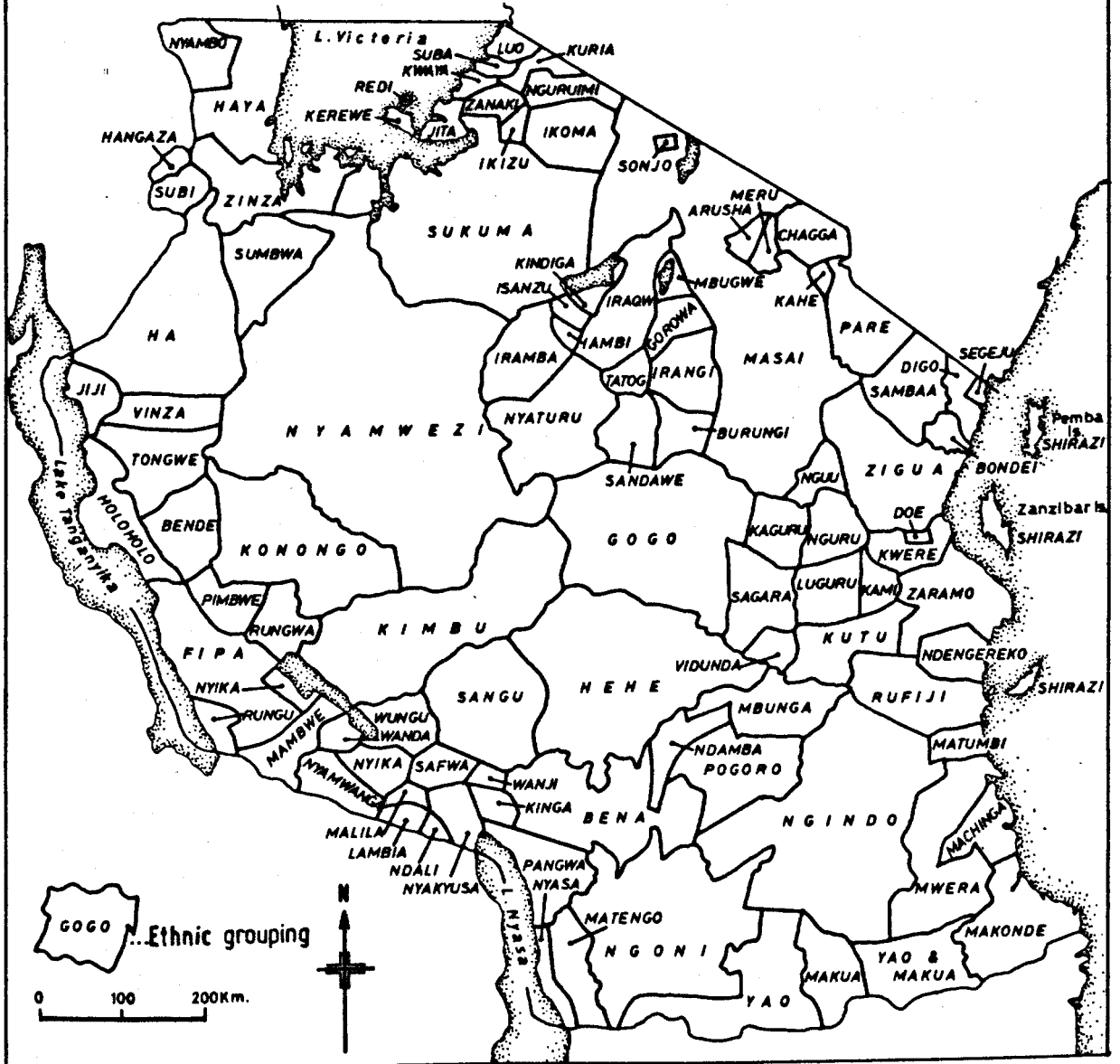
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Map 1. TANZANIA : Regions and Administrative Centres.



Map 2. TANZANIA : Major Ethnic Groupings.



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to analyze and put into focus the nature and practice of Tanzanian theatre within the framework of the political events after the Arusha Declaration of 1967. The period after 1967 has been dominated by attempts to direct Tanzania towards socialism using the Arusha Declaration as a blueprint and guideline. The social reality of the period, however, has been informed by not only the political and economic attempts related directly to the Arusha Declaration but also by historical factors within which the attempts have had to be practised. Theatre practice after 1967 is a historical aesthetic response and expression of the social reality as well as a component of that reality. This view underscores the assumption that there is always a dialectical relationship between politics and theatre as there is between general culture and the various components which constitute it.

In this study, Culture is understood to contain the dual meaning of a way of life, complex and total or what others have termed 'Gestalt'¹ as well as the arts which are specific cultural products. General culture is an embodiment of historical, economic and political factors articulating within a given society. Cabral has defined culture as:

... the status reached by a given society and each of its components before itself and before history (expressed objectively or subjectively) existing between the various elements or groups which constitute the society in question; relations and types of relations between man and nature, between man and his environment; relations and types of relations between the individual or collective components of a society ...²

The articulation of the various components which produce culture creates a dialectical relationship amongst the components as well as each to general culture. This is the relationship which exists between politics and theatre. Politics in the present context is taken to mean that part of general culture which concerns itself with the organization of society, relations between individuals and groups, the structures (including the state) and elements which contribute and are the result of the organization and relationships.³ The theatre is an aesthetic communication medium whose essence resides in the performer-audience component. All theatre is political and the most political of all art forms. Theatre does not only express, represent, signal and carry aspects of political reality and the values it engenders, but it is also a political forum - a social event embodying relationships and organization. As an art form, however, theatre contains also an aesthetic component - specific language of signification with codes and conventions which are also historical.⁴ The aesthetic vocabulary as well as the social reality are, at any given theatre event, selected and arranged to effect a certain impact. Theatre communication is, therefore, never total, impartial, nor is it objective. As such, theatre avails itself to manipulation and is always propagandistic.⁵

Particular types of propaganda assume dominance in each period depending on such variables as the functions ascribed to theatre in relation to the social organization and reality, the exercise of power and hegemony.⁶ Propaganda can therefore be explicit or implicit, consciously or unconsciously effected but always present.

The above political and aesthetic considerations provide the analytical framework through which the practice of theatre after 1967 is discussed and analyzed. The Arusha Declaration inaugurated not only events which have affected the economic and political reality of Tanzania but also made it possible for certain values and attitudes to become dominant. These have informed those who practise theatre and the official support for the art form. The practice of theatre as seen through written and improvised plays, dance and poetic drama, popular theatre, theatre in education, as well as theatre training, is therefore discussed in reference to form, content and the political and economic factors which have informed its existence in a historical perspective.

The study is divided up into six chapters with several sections in each. Chapter 1 provides the political and aesthetic background to the Tanzanian contemporary theatre. The focus is on three major areas: traditional theatre performances within and outside the colonial framework; Western theatre aesthetics and Kiswahili as a language of theatre communication. Chapter 2 looks at the Arusha Declaration itself, its tenets, objectives, implementation and some of its effects and problems as well as the theoretical response to the declaration from both

artists and politicians. The work of the leading dramatist of the time - Ebrahim N. Hussein - is the concern of Chapter 3, while the other writers and theatre practitioners are discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 focuses on theatre practice within official institutions as well as on policies which have informed theatre in and outside the institutions. The last Chapter looks at the practice of theatre for social development as well as the exercise of theatre control and censorship. Within each chapter, photographs have been provided wherever possible to give visual statements of performances and their milieux. There are also two maps which provide geographical locations of places as well as Tanzania's ethnic groupings, some of which are mentioned in the study.

Taken together, the chapters provide a comprehensive study of contemporary Tanzanian theatre in the major areas where it has been practised since 1967. Very little has been written about theatre experience of the period and in an approach taken by this study. Except for reviews of individual plays in various periodicals, aspects of modern theatre practised are contained in two studies: Hussein's 'On the Development of Theatre in East Africa', and Mollé's 'The Drama of Penina Muhando'.⁷ Although it provides a social framework, Mollé's study limits itself to the work of one dramatist. The study, moreover, does not include the dramatist's major works produced after 1979. Hussein's work provides a useful overview of the development of theatre in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It analyzes the development of theatre in the three countries within a somewhat political and

historical context. Because of its regional perspective, however, Hussein's work is not comprehensive enough for each country. Moreover, the fact that the historical cut off period of the study is 1970, has meant that little of the theatre experience after 1967 is covered in the study. This study does not only bring up to date the development of theatre in Tanzania, but it aims also at widening the understanding of that development within specific conditions as Tanzania's in the period under discussion.

Notes to Introduction

- 1 The term has been used by amongst others Peter Worsley in The Three Worlds: Culture and World Development, London, 1984, pp.45-60. On Culture see also Raymond Williams, Culture, London, 1981; Amilcar Cabral, 'National Culture' in Unity and Struggle, London, 1980; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 'National Culture' in Homecoming, London, 1972.
- 2 Amilcar Cabral, op.cit., p.142.
- 3 This definition is closer to Lenin's who defined politics as 'the relations between classes' and amongst its concerns are distribution of resources, selection of values and objectives. See V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.V.
- 4 For further discussion on politics and theatre, see amongst others Janet Wolff, The Social Production of Art, London, 1981; A.S. Vasquez, Art and Society: Essays in Marxist Aesthetics, London, 1973; John McGrath, A Good Night Out, London, 1981. See also Catherine Itzin, Stages in the Revolution: Political Theatre in Britain since 1968, London, 1980; Robert M. McClaren, 'The Theatre and Cultural Struggle in South Africa: Aspects of Theatre in the Witwatersrand between 1958 and 1976', Ph.D. thesis, Leeds University, 1980; Ronald Taylor, ed., Aesthetics and Politics, London, 1977.
- 5 Szanto has identified three types of theatre propaganda: agitational, integrational and dialectical. See George H. Szanto, Theatre and Propaganda, Austin, 1978, pp.9 & 72.
- 6 On hegemony and culture see detailed discussions in A. Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Hoare and Nowell Smith, eds., London, 1971, and Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature, Oxford, 1977, pp.108-114.
- 7 See Ebrahim N. Hussein, 'On the Development of Theatre in East Africa', Ph.D. thesis, Humbolt University, 1975; Jesse Mollel, 'The Drama of Penina Muhando', M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1979.

CHAPTER 1

AESTHETICS AND POLITICS IN TRADITIONAL AND COLONIAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

This chapter looks at theatre performances in traditional society as well as aesthetic and political factors affecting performances during the colonial era. While providing a historical background to theatre events in the post Arusha theatre events, the chapter highlights elements which would inform theatre practice after 1967. The argument here is that while there was some continuity to be seen in traditional performances during the pre and post colonial era, colonial economic and political organization brought changes in the aesthetics and organization of traditional performances. Moreover, the introduction of Western aesthetics provided not only an alternative to theatre expression but also undermined the development and existence of traditional performances. Theatre practice in the post independence period and especially after 1967 can be seen as part of the political and aesthetic struggles to incorporate, reject or embrace elements from both traditional and colonial theatre experiences. Kiswahili as a chosen national language becomes part of these struggles and is closely linked to the types of theatre expressions produced in the post Arusha

Declaration period.

1. The Traditional Forms of Theatre

Keir Elam provides the most useful definition of theatre which embraces such activities as can be found in Africa:

Theatre is taken to refer to the complex phenomena associated with the performer - audience transaction: that is with the production and communication of meaning in the performance itself and with the systems underlying it.¹

Theatre performance in traditional African societies is a manifestation of social organization and practice, on one hand, and the specific aesthetic systems which give the performances their forms on the other. This fulfils both material and non-material needs. The performances, then, do not aim at mere imitation of the social reality but desire to atune society to the universe. The approach to performance is cosmological combining both spiritual essence and material matter. Man, the gods, the spirits, the ancestors and nature are seen and made to form a link effected in ritualistic events. The cultural expressions of African traditional societies contain also within them elements of pre-capitalist characteristics of communal organization, a presence of low level technology and the intertwining of social practice one into the other. Agricultural or pastoral modes of existence, for example, co-exist with community interdependence, religious, philosophical and aesthetic practice.² In Tanzania, the 'bugobogobo' dance drama of the Wasukuma is directly related to the way of life and activities of an agricultural people. Heroic

recitations reflect the traditional political organization of the Bahayas or the pastoral way of life of the Masai. These performances reflect also the important role played by manual labour in both economic and aesthetic production. In manual labour, the important power is human labour which enables man to obtain the product of his labour immediately since there is no gap between the producer and the object of his labour. His aesthetic expressions are also dominated by manual labour centred around his own body - his movements, gestures, speech. His body becomes the instrument of transmission in an audio-visual cultural media. Just as he uses the hand tool to obtain his physical material needs, he uses his voice and body to create and fulfil his non-physical needs. Orality and performance become very important features of aesthetic expression in traditional societies with the latter predominating:

There is no mystery about the first most basic characteristic of oral literature ... This is the significance of the actual performance. Oral literature is by definition dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion - there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product.³

Finnegan does not provide us with the reasons why oral literature and performance are important features of African societies. We can nevertheless assume that it depends on the material and instruments of expression which is man himself.

The communication structure of traditional societies with man at its centre is also exposed through the intertwining of not only different forms of aesthetic practices but also these with other social

processes. Art being a form of labour which is creative, is indistinguishable from other forms of labour and becomes a manifestation of the practical activity of man by virtue of which he expresses and confirms himself in the objective world as a social and creative being.⁴ The gaps between his religious and other forms of ideological expression and aesthetic practice are very narrow or non-existent. One has to look at ritual performances in both East and West Africa to observe this phenomenon.

Take the Odwira festival of the Akwamu of Ghana, for example. The festival is a manifestation of religious, political and economic organizations of the society:

The people celebrate this festival on the fall of the ninth Adaye. The festival has a three fold significance. First, it is a period of remembrance: a time when people are reminded of the warrior kings who helped to found their state. It is also a time when the chiefs and their people bring sacrifices to their gods to thank them for the mercies of the past and to ask for the protection in the future. Above all, it is a time when people come together to renew their family ties. In other words, it is a political religious and social festival.⁵

The ritual then becomes the people's attestation to their fundamental religious and ideological beliefs. It also affirms their tie to their mode of existence, the yam. The yam brings together the past and the future, the old and the new, the living and the dead. The concern is the total welfare of the people and the reproduction of values, systems, disciplines, taboos and political institutions. Amongst various tribal societies in East Africa similar rituals can be observed. Okot pBitek has described one of them:

During the feast of Jok men and women and children from all parts of the chiefdom gathered together, offered sacrifices to Jok and prayed that certain dangers that threatened the chiefdom as a whole should be averted. They feasted together, sharing the sacrificial beasts and beer and dancing at the chief's enclosure. With its rites, symbols and sacred places the chiefdom Jok and its annual feast united members of the chiefdom hence its political significance.⁶

In these societies, cultural content and institutions acquire a significant importance because they carry the knowledge of the means of production while affirming man's creative being and powers. The social goal is pursued through music, dance, mime, drama, and poetry which are all united in performance.

The argument that African traditional theatre performances are communal, participatory and have a use-value finds its validity in the very social and political organization of its societies which they share with similarly organized societies outside the continent. The performances are communal because the society itself is communal. Collectivity becomes a forceful element in both art and physical labour as man is absorbed in the pre-occupation with survival. Work is the responsibility of all and art being creative work is produced and consumed communally. Moreover, the low division of labour makes it difficult to separate the different types of material production as well as distinguish cultural producers from consumers. This kind of communality is especially strong amongst people who lack centralized political structures. For those with centralized authority and a display of divisions of wealth, privileges and status corresponding to the distribution of power and authority, specialization in cultural

production results in different forms of participation. These societies support professional priests and artists whose political office means also economic privileges. But even here, the society draws from the same historical and cosmological perspective. Goals and intention are socially defined and the performances unite the various elements in society for a communal expression.

In performance, communal participation ranges from an 'all are performers' situation to a delineation of audience and performers at different levels of participation. The audience, however, no matter its nature and composition is never a disinterested observer but an active participant in the process of performance. In the story-telling performances, the teller and the audience complement each other from the beginning to the end. A dance could start a story in which everyone present participates. Somebody, other than the story-teller might instigate the telling of a particular story, the teller is urged on, challenged, stopped or guided. Songs are sung, music played and dances performed within the participating nature of the form and occasion.

Oyin Ogunba has warned against the notion that traditional African audiences are 'participating' audiences:

If what is meant by this is that all the people like one man join in the performance, then it would be simplistic appraisal of the phenomenon; what takes place rather is that the drama relies heavily on the creation of the right atmosphere, that it is more conceptually based than the general run of drama in, say the western tradition.⁷

Ogunba is right when he tries to dispel the romanticized notion of

participation in traditional performances but the creation of the right atmosphere is too ambiguous for the type of involvement of traditional audiences not only at the conceptual base but also during the process of performance itself. Not only are they attuned to the social and aesthetic symbols and signs presented but the physical participation itself becomes important.

Another feature which has often been linked with traditional theatre performances is the use-value inherent in its practice. It has been argued that the pedagogical nature of theatre performances like story-telling, some rituals, dance, drama recitations etc. are shown in their acting as institutions for the reproduction and translation of social values from one generation to another. In this they fulfil what Dobrowolski has called 'two needs of human existence', the improvement of human existence and the regulation of human relationships.⁸ While, on one hand, man tries to gain mastery over his environment, on the other, he tries to order his relationships to other men through the set of values, capabilities and skills which bind them together. The performance arts participate in both of these human struggles and needs.

The ideological element of the performance arts is seen here in its capacity to influence and shape consciousness. Examples are many in which various performance forms are shown to be vehicles of instruction. Most girls in various communities in Tanzania go through an initiation ceremony called 'Unyago' generally or 'digubi' in particular areas.⁹ Some of these use theatre performances extensively

in the ceremonies. During 'unyago' a girl is initiated into womanhood by elder women who use dance, mime, dramatic scenarios and songs to put her through the process of symbolic death from one status to a rebirth into another. Her responsibilities in the new status are imparted to her through the performances.¹⁰ The pedagogical function of theatre can also be seen in the 'Mkole' ceremonies of the Wazaramo, the Ngasi of the Wachaga as well as in the rituals for the dead amongst the Wahehe and the Wanyakyusa. The pedagogy through the performance content, however, is in the main static, making the value systems imparted quite rigid. The aim is to retain the status quo. Such characters as rebels, for example, are not tolerable characters in the traditional context where the drive is for conformity. This rigidity in its content contrasts greatly to the openness of the performances where there is ample room for improvisation. The forms and structures used are in a state of flux so that the performances display flexibility. This flexibility can be seen in the individual performance elements used as well as in the relationship which exists between the different elements.

Another characteristic which is widespread in traditional performances is the use of symbolic content and conventionality or 'stylized forms' as Soyinka calls them. Examples of symbolic content in theatre performances are many and in this the African traditional theatre shares with the performances, for example, of the Chinese where action and objects conjure up images of realities which transcend everyday reality.¹¹ During these performances the performer leads the

audience to a perception of a wider implication of reality. Victor Turner recounts the ritual performances of Ndembu of Central Africa this way:

In Ndembu ritual context, almost every article used, every gesture employed, every song or prayer, every unit of space and time, by convention stands for something other than itself. It is more than it seems and, often a good deal more. The Ndembu are aware of the expressive or symbolic function of ritual elements.¹²

During the initiation ceremonies of the Wapogoro of Mahenge, a girl is put through symbolic events. The day on which she is presented to the public, she goes through a symbolic death while her mother goes through a symbolic childbirth. There are also objects and enactments for symbolic ^gco₂ition to introduce the initiate into sexuality. The initiate is then given back her power of speech, to walk and perform all the other daily activities. The whole performance which takes the whole last day of the one week event is infused with dance, songs, enactments and physical representations endowed with various symbolic meanings¹³ - meanings which encompass the particular cosmological world view. The purpose is not a realistic portrayal of an object or experience but an extraction of these through knowledge to create a wider reality. This is true of not only the African performance arts but the other arts as well like painting and sculpture. Reality is penetrated and the essence exposed. Animal characters in folk-tales represent human behaviour and types; varying word and musical tones are representations of actions, space, and attitudes; formalized gestures are mimetic

representations of character and action. The symbolism, however, is translated back to reality for the representations affect and have real presences in everyday reality - be they metaphysical or material presences. John Iliffe is correct when he points out that to many Africans 'ritual is not merely symbolic': it was most often real. He is, however, not quite correct when he observes that in spite of their powerful symbolism and rituals, the 'Africans were not necessarily religious'.¹⁴ It is not clear what measures of religiosity Iliffe has used to make this evaluation. The traditional societies in Tanzania, it is true, most often lack the complicated pantheonic structure found amongst such people as the Yorubas of Nigeria. However simple their spiritual world in structures, most adhere to the beliefs and the metaphysics of their cosmology. Earlier on Iliffe observes that practices in certain cults show an 'immediacy to religious life'.¹⁵ This immediacy is not peculiar to certain cults alone but to all communities with their own separate beliefs and organizations. Whatever the particular world view, its perceived reality was expressed through symbolism in a variety of ways for objectives which were quite specific. Dan Ben-Amos has called this kind of communication 'the symbolic meanings of a category of expressions':

Texts, framed into genres and performed in socially defined communicative situations, acquire significance beyond literal meanings of their constituent words ...Genealogies and legends function towards the promotion of social stability because they are symbolic expressions of political power and historical truth.¹⁶

The symbolism in African performances works a lot through conventions. Conventionality here means the adherence to an elaborate system of recognized customs, symbols and accepted rules which act as signals between performer and the audience. Conventions can be traditional (inherited) or occasional, set for the purposes of a particular performance and audience. The audience recognizes the conventions because either they know them already or because they have been clearly set and defined for the particular purpose at hand. On the general level, each theatre style has its own conventions born out of the particularity of the cultural experience. Conventionality in the Chinese traditional theatre manifests itself in the employment of specific movements, props, costumes, music, instruments and language. Though differing in practice and degree, the African traditional theatre displays conventionality, for example, in the strict adherence to particular forms, participants and space in some performances. A good example are the ritual masked dances of the Makonde of Eastern Africa, called 'Midimu'. The 'Midimu' ceremonies are usually performed during the dry season (June-October) when the moon is between a quarter and a half phase. Even though the ceremony might be performed after some felicitous event such as a bountiful harvest or a large haul of fish, it is principally done at the termination of the initiation of boys and girls. The most distinctive feature of the 'Midimu' dances is the usage of masks. These masks are specific in character, costume, dance and music:

Some of these masks represent spirits of the dead or spirits

of mythical animals such as the great monkey, Linawere ...
Other masks represent characters or animals and each of them
has a different costume ...¹⁷

Besides a different, distinct costume, each mask has its own dance movement, sounds, music, songs and mime.¹⁸ The audience acknowledge and recognize the masks on three levels; as representations of animals, people or spirits; as symbolic representations of particular traits and values; and as manifestations of forces which have links to their social being. The area for performance for 'Midimu' is usually quite specific in each community, a characteristic that can be found in other performances like those associated with 'Mkole'. A few days before a girl is married, a 'mkole' is held. The event takes its name from the tree under which the performances are held. If there is no 'mkole' nearby, another tree is chosen such as a mango on top of which a 'mkole' branch is hung.¹⁹ Symbolism legitimizes the reality of the mango tree as 'mkole' and it is the representation rather than the actual tree which gains importance.

Language tends to display conventional patterns as well. Usage of particular verbal forms in particular occasions as well as deviations from these are recognized as patterns. Sex, age and status are features which can become variables in determining the usage of verbal forms:

The thematic domain of folklore in each society is culturally defined. The formulation of narrative plots out of this substance is also subject to principles of creativity and existing conceptions of narrative and poetic forms ... The social circumstances in story telling situation and the narrative abilities of the speaker affect the content and

the structure of narrative, but even these changes follow rules for social verbal behaviour.²⁰

This is not to say, however, that in all traditional performances, everything which is heard or seen is symbolic and conventional but the argument stands that these characteristics are so important and dominant that even improvisation occurs within recognized symbols and conventions.

Traditional performances display also a complexity of attitudes. The performances often combine the serious and the comic, the reverent and the irreverent, the sacred and the profane. The positive nature of reality is oftentimes portrayed alongside false pretensions. Ridicule, irony, sarcasm, satire, are all used to create comic moments even within non-comedic occasions. Finnegan singles out the Mande comedies as exceptions rather than the rule in African performances with satiric elements. This is not quite true as various other examples exist which show this characteristic: the dance-drama of the Yorubas and Hausa, the Isinyago and other Mask dances of the Makonde, the heroic recitations of the Bahima and the Bahaya, just to name a few. Most often the satiric out-look is not confined only to performances but to the overall social cosmological out-look. Adedeji points out the Yorubas as a good example.²¹ The Pogoros of south-eastern Tanzania perform satirical scenarios which accompany burial ceremonies. These incorporate features of the serious and the comic. While the dead is mourned, ancestors are invoked to receive the deceased. At the same time enactments are done whose material comes from the dead person's

life, his relationship to the spirit and the living world. Satire is a major part of the performances done at these funerals.²²

One form of traditional theatre performance which drew a lot of attention in the post Arusha period was 'Majigambo' or heroic recitations. In their traditional form heroic recitations display some of the features discussed above as well as specific elements peculiar to them because of specific political and aesthetic factors which inform it.

Heroic recitation is a genre both literary and theatrical which has been called simultaneously heroic poetry or poems, praise poems or poetry. This form has been practised by amongst others the Wanyakyusa, Wazanaki, Wakunga, Wangoni, Wamasai and Wahaya of Tanzania. Outside Tanzania, such groups as the Zulu, Bahima and Banyankole amongst others, have used this form. A.C. Jordan has pointed out:

To the Bantu-speaking ... the praise poem is their proudest artistic possession. It is in this genre that the greatest possibilities of a Bantu language as a medium of literary expression are to be found.²³

But praise poems or heroic recitations are not enclosed literary expressions. Their meanings and functions can only be realized in their dramatization or performance. The linguistic and poetic features are harnessed to effect a theatre event which is highly visual and aural. Such items as verse and stanza organization, sounds and their combinations, pitch, tones, voice quality as well as meaning of words provide what Mazisi Kunene has termed 'the symphonic structure'.²⁴ Dance, movement, costuming, music and acting are to varying degrees used to realize the full meaning of heroic poems in performance.

As poetry, heroic recitation relies on imagery, metaphor and figurative language where there is little stress on personal emotions but rather 'a series of pictures is conveyed to the listeners through a number of laconic and often rather staccato sentences, a grouping of ideas which may on different occasions come in a different order'.²⁵ Some outsiders have considered the expression in the poetry obscure but this can only mean that the imagery and cultural signals are denied such observers.

The origins of heroic recitations remain obscure but it has been argued that the form was well nurtured and developed amongst hunting and militaristic peoples. Kunene points out that because of the ever present challenge to manhood by frequent wars, encounters with wild beasts in hunting and various other dangers, the society was forced to look upon courage and heroic deeds as necessary for its survival.²⁶ The invocation before and recounting of the events after a hunt or a war provide good opportunities to narrate and display the strength, the courage and action of the individuals involved. Praise names are used which link one's immediate action to those of his ancestors. The forms of praise poetry are also used during various occasions such as weddings, installation ceremonies, festivals, reception for important visitors etc. The occasion usually determines what type of poetry is appropriate. Socially, heroic poetry has the function of transmitting accepted values, history and for forging kinship relations. Although this genre can be found amongst 'stateless' peoples, it has flourished more in hierarchical structured societies where institutions of kingship

or chiefships are emphasized. Here, heroic recitations become means for the rulers to consolidate their powers, justify their positions and are generally used as a means of obtaining favour and power. The Bahaya of Tanzania are a good example. This society passed from a system of clan leadership, through political segmentation to an amalgamation of the clans and a feudal kingdom under the Bahinda. The Bahinda, a pastoral people, are said to have come from Bunyoro (Uganda) and through coercion and persuasion consolidated power. The political system was feudal and hierarchical which stratified the society. This political system encouraged the development of heroic poetry and the rise of heroic poets as specialists. The class nature of the society eventually dictated the occasion, the type of audience and the content of heroic recitations. Hunting exploits and military heroics became prominent.²⁹

Even in class society, however, heroic recitations are public performances addressed to an individual or group. Audience participation means joining in the rejoinders to encourage the reciter, singing and dancing or challenging the actions of the performer. Aesthetic appreciation is achieved by a combination of the reciter's ability to create and evoke images, the arrangement of words and sounds to attain particular effect, flexibility and restraint in dance and movement as well as the mimetic ability of the performer. Ruyendo has described a traditional heroic recitation this way:

The performer recites at a terrific pace and at the same time jumps about, dances with his feet, arms, jabs his spear backwards and forwards, as if to strike, while working

dexterously with his shield to defend himself. As the shows are held on a competitive basis with, say, two men weighing their acts of bravery against each other, one's jabbing of the spear and defence with the shield will be at and against, respectively, like the actions of the other man. It depends upon creativity and acting ability of the actors to keep the spectators with them. The actors have got a way of dividing up the lines they say evenly and then pausing for breath at a point that makes sense and when the spectators have reached a point of high change of emotion which they want to let out. At each time the performer pauses the participating audience register enthusiastically with 'Yeeeeeee'.²⁸

Morris has observed the same performance characteristics of the heroic recitations of the Banyankole (which are the same as the Bahaya's) where the manner of recitation is as important as the content itself:

Each verse must be recited at an abnormal speed without pause either between words or lines and the reciter must not falter in so doing. The speed of the recitation is such that only those accustomed to this art can attain it. ... In his right hand he may hold a spear horizontal above his shoulder; with which he from time to time gives small forward jabs for emphasis.²⁹

By using metaphor and simile a reciter praises himself, his clan and ancestors. He compares himself to natural phenomenon, to animals and to legendary or mythical beings to show his moral, physical and emotional courage and bravery. The following is a praise poem from the Bahaya in which military exploits are evident as well as the reciter's recounting of his deeds with allusions to places, events and people:

I am the gates of Mukabya's royal palace that rattle as they
open
I speared the Baganda foes! Mbindi Bitegelelaine, Kaisailiwo
and Ijumbi's brother
Lastly the Ganda who fell dead at Ryamahoro
I am a stick of wood that escaped the chopper's axe
And fiercely hit Kamunyu's eye
I am a brave warrior who wiped out the Baganda foes

I was then named 'womb protector' the invincible warrior who
fought bravely at Kabwela a whole day and cattle were
compelled to remain indoors

...

I am the lightning that shines in dark wilderness
I could see fish very deep in the sea
I was given a praise name!
Byaishwa.³⁰

The heroic recitations, the different forms of story theatre, dances, dance musical forms as well as performances which are part of the many ritual and ceremonial events show traditional theatre performances as events imbued with complex realities. The integration of a complexity of realities as well as aesthetic forms in these performances has led some to consider them as examples of 'total theatre'. Adedeji has called them 'the gestalt of all the art forms in one performance',³¹ and meanings are derived from the essence of the total performance rather than in any individual component. While these forms of 'total theatre' have continued to exist in Tanzania, their aesthetics and organization have responded to and been affected by historical factors. The contemporary theatre practitioner who draws his sources from the traditional forms is doing so at a time when both colonialism and independence have been social realities. The economic and political re-organization brought about by colonialism, for example, introduced new organizational structures as well as new functions for the traditional performances. These were to play a part in the use of traditional performances in the post Arusha Declaration period as well as provide the political rationale for the rejection or incorporation of changes brought by colonialism.

2. Traditional Performances in Colonial Times

While not being enthusiastic about the existence or development of African traditional performances, the colonial government found it, at times, convenient to exploit them for its own benefit. Traditional performances were recognized as crowd pullers especially during exhibitions which had economic motives. The many people who could be drawn to the performances could in turn be potential buyers and consumers of goods displayed at the exhibitions. In one of its reports of 1948, the colonial administration directed:

We attach particular importance to the exhibition or show as a technique. ... Plays, dance, concert parties and the like can be intimately connected with the exhibition technique especially if traditional festival and celebrations are utilized as a setting for the exhibitions...³²

The report went on to recommend the use of folk tales and drama in these performances because, as one official put it, the native was such a 'natural performer':

To a large extent the instinct of the people for the music and drama finds spontaneous expression, whether in musical and dramatic societies or in tribal ceremonies.³³

The encouragement for these performances had another underlying rationalization for the colonial government. The activities demanded neither investment nor financial expenditure. The performances were to be done by already existing groups. All that was needed was an official order to be given and the groups would be forced to make an appearance. When a suggestion was put forward to invest more in the shows, the Colonial Office wrote to the Secretariat in Dar-es-Salaam categorically rejecting the suggestion:

We know only too well that this is no moment for suggesting anything that calls for further expenditure by Colonial Government. But there is clearly a great deal to be said for anything new which might help popularize government provided that it can be done cheaply and without undue demands on manpower.³⁴

It seems that the colonial government was not only reluctant to invest more in what it clearly saw as a profitable venture, but even the minimal funds which were allocated were not always available. One official involved with the shows complained:

There are three main snags to staging anything - lack of time, the difficulty in some cases of obtaining certain materials and the ever present shortage of money.³⁵

Prior to 1948, however, the colonial administration's attitude towards traditional performances had been almost a reversal to the post 1948 period. Up to that time traditional performances were discouraged and in some cases prohibited. In the latter case they even became punishable offences to the practitioners. Evidence shows that the government's attitude towards traditional performances as well as the arts in general generated some concern from certain individuals. In a correspondence between the General Secretary of the African Association and the Chief Secretary to the Government, accusations and denials on official policy featured heavily. While the General Secretary complained about the government's prohibition of traditional arts and the consequences, the Chief Secretary denied that it was official policy. He attributed the General Secretary's view as due to misunderstanding and misinformation.³⁶ The fact remains, however, neither in the correspondences nor in its practices did the government

encourage traditional arts or performances. The change in 1948 came, as we have already seen, as part of economic interests. There was also a political factor in this change. Prior to 1948, traditional performances were seen as encouraging divisiveness and tribal identifications. The administration feared that these might lead to chaos. But with the advent of nationalistic tendencies amongst the ruled populations, there was a change in the official attitude. The colonialists moved to contain the nationalism which was threatening its colonies and the endorsement of traditional performances became one way to realize this containment. So the change can be viewed as neither charitable nor unconscious. Having stubbornly survived official negligence and rejection, traditional forms became useful for economic and political ends.

The organization of both the German and British colonial economy caused great migrations of people from villages to urban or plantation centres.³⁷ In these centres, people who came from the same villages or tribal areas formed social and cultural groups. This was made easy by the fact that people from similar origins tended to settle around each other. In a survey on Dar-es-Salaam, for example, J.A.K. Leslie has reported that most Wanyamwezi settled in Magomeni, enclaves of Wasukuma could be found in Kigogo, Vingunguti and Kigamboni areas while Wazaramo congregated in Buguruni.³⁸ It has been reported that by 1954, there was about 58 cultural troupes in Dar-es-Salaam which were performing regularly. Amongst them were such organizations as the Ukami Union which brought together the Wakwere, Wakwami, Wazigua and



Figure 1: Traditional dancing under watchful eye of missionaries, Kwiwo Mahenge, c.1958.

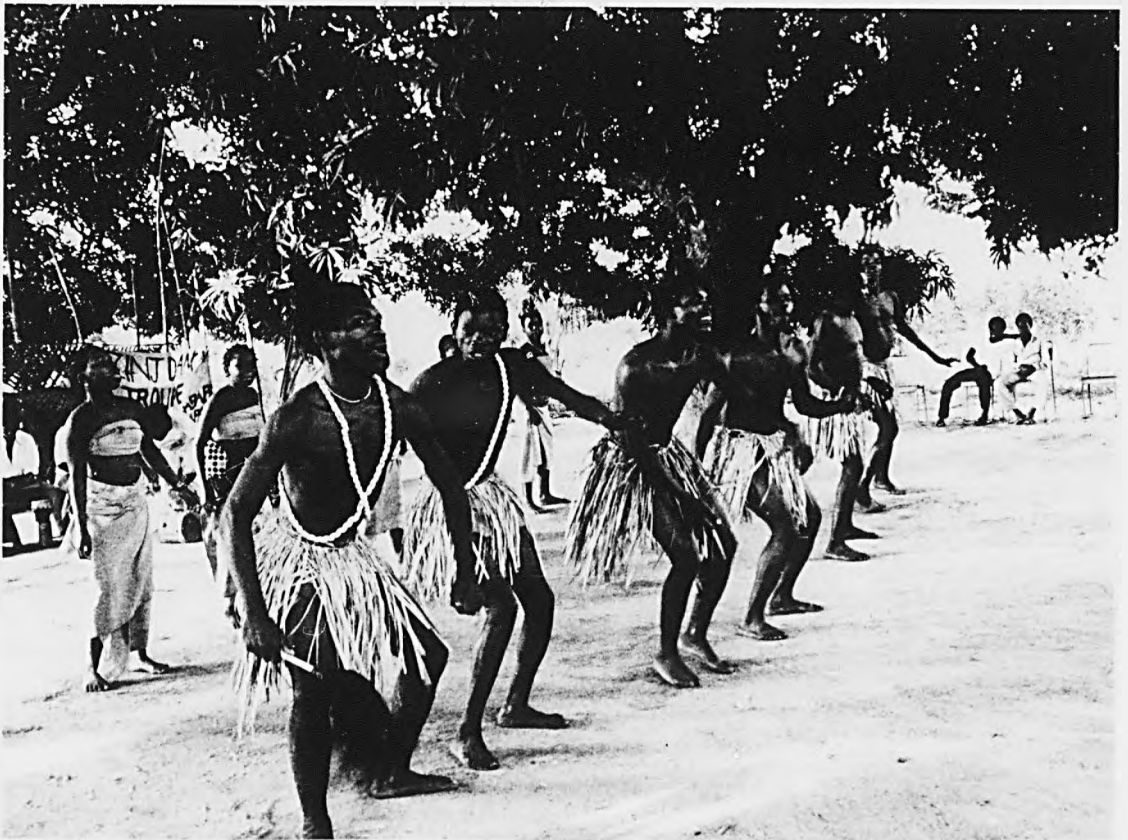


Figure 2: Traditional performance in a village-like setting, Zinj The Village Museum, DSM, 1984.

Waluguru; the Ulanga Association of the Wapogoro; and the Southern Tanganyikan People's Union of the Wanyasa and Wamatengo.³⁹ The activities of these groups included the performing of traditional dances, rituals, ceremonies and more often than not, taking care of the general social welfare of its members. It was, at times, to some of these groups that the colonial administration turned, especially in the cities during exhibitions and festivals. One member of such a group has reported:

We were organized to help each other in many ways - during difficulties like an occasion of death. Or happy events like marriage. We had a dance group and we performed everywhere but especially for the tribal members. Rituals and ceremonies were very important to everyone being away from home. We participated in these too. Sometimes we were called by the government to perform. We didn't like that always. Sometimes we had to spend long hours, sometimes a long time without food. Unless we brought it.⁴⁰

The groups obviously selected carefully what they performed for outsiders, for example the exhibition shows, Empire Day ceremonies and other colonial celebrations. Celebratory dances and dance dramas became the most popular. Performances connected with rituals of burial, possessions or rainmaking were usually reserved for the particular occasions which necessitated the performance. 'Ngoma', then, or the dances, were widely performed when toleration for such activities became the official attitude.

In the urban areas, performances were not only through tribal affiliations. There were also organizations which brought together people of different ethnic origins but with similar interests. The Beni organizations were such a group. The Beni clubs were, in a way,

the first social organization which transcended tribalism. It has been pointed out by Ranger that in Tanganyika, 'Beni was the expression of competition between two levels of those young men who had moved out of or away from "tribal context"'.⁴¹ The colonial situation itself, then became the reason for the birth of Beni. Encouraged by both missionary and government elements, Beni spread quickly from the coast to areas in the hinterland. The members of these clubs were usually, the African civil servant, teachers, soldiers and the like. Beni took its expressive elements from colonial social and political organization. The movements, costuming and music, for example, borrowed from the colonial military bands, music and character.⁴² In the beginning, the Europeans hailed Beni. They saw in the imitation of European dress, drills and organization a good move away from the traditional 'barbaric' dances. In times of war Beni provided a chance to support war efforts as well as celebrate the victories which followed. It provided good opportunities for integrating a colonized people within the culture of their masters. Beni, however, proved too successful in its organization, a fact which alarmed those who initially supported it. Beni associations became pre-occupied not only with the dance but provided a wider social forum for its members. Both the government and the missionaries changed their tune and were quick to react:

This ngoma ya Beni is a political secret society of communist origins. It is strictly forbidden for our Christians to join this society.⁴³

This comment reversed the missionaries' attitude towards Beni who only years before provided the then freed slaves with props and costumes for



Figure 3: A 'beni' variant, DSM, 1984.



Figure 4: Traditional dance (Selo) on stage, DSM, 1984.

a Beni-like show.⁴⁴ The government also thought the Beni movement needed to be watched closely because they might evolve into more formal social clubs 'with political implications'.⁴⁵ These colonial fears were not wholly unfounded. Some prominent members of Beni organizations later became instrumental in establishing associations with more clear nationalistic characteristics. These became forerunners of TANU and the Independence Movement.⁴⁶

The migration from the villages initiated by colonial administration brought one of the major changes in performance aesthetics - participation. Those away from their home areas, were performing amongst an audience which was not always homogeneous. In this situation aesthetic and social links were not always present to allow either for physical participation or mental attunement. Performances were becoming more and more an event where the performers were separated from their audience. Except in rural areas where homogeneity is still possible, the traditional model of participation continues to be absent in many places in Tanzania. The heterogeneous nature of the urban population in both colonial and the post-independence period has meant that some symbols in performance have become obsolete or replaced by different symbols. Performers cannot rely on the specificity of traditional symbolic language, gesture, costume, dance etc. to convey meanings. They have had to adapt new ways to speak to this larger audience. Even though there were close links between some of those who had moved away and their original rural areas, some of the performances have lost their sense

of immediacy and social purpose. Harvest celebrations, for example, are still part of a reality that embraces the seasons and the economic way of the peasants. These celebrations do not, at the immediate level, mean the same things to the urban worker. While certain rituals continue to be observed amongst groups in the towns, both the colonial and independence experience inaugurated other rituals in which the performances took new meaning and functions. One organizational characteristic which the colonial migrations of peoples did not affect, was the fact that performers in the new areas did not develop into professional groups - those who made their living only through performances. Even though the urban groups did not become self-supportive, however, there was during the colonial times, the inauguration of charged fees for performance, a trend which grew after independence and especially after the Arusha Declaration. The performance fees during the colonial era were mostly in terms of either a limited amount of cash to the performer and/or the provision of food and drinks by the host.⁴⁷ Except in the villages gate fees have become part of theatre, sometimes rising to ridiculous dominance.

It should not be assumed, however, that traditional performances were only affected in areas where people were forced to live away from rural areas. Even in rural areas, the colonial economic and administrative policies and practice broke down traditional cultural entities when communities were dismantled and fragmented. Indigenous political authority was undermined through the replacement or co-optation of chiefs and traditional organizations by foreign colonial administrators.

Thus performances and ceremonies that were part of the political institutions of society eventually lost meaning and reasons for their existence. Christianity which had adopted a 'radical' rather than 'adaptive' approach to its proselytization campaign did much to accelerate the deterioration of traditional performances.⁴⁸ Converts were forbidden to participate in rituals which featured so many performances. P.O. Mlama cites the example of the Masai heroic recitations which were prohibited by officials after infiltrating them. During the recitations, officials tried to gather information on cattle raiding as the reciters boasted of their exploits. The officials then moved in to arrest the boasting raiders thus discouraging anyone from practising the art form.⁴⁹ With a few exceptions, those introduced to colonial education were partly or completely cut off from models of traditional performances. With such a background the call to revive, restore and develop traditional performances after independence and especially after the Arusha Declaration is understandable. But the task to use traditional forms for a contemporary society demands analysis and selection. Traditional performances like other traditional practices are not frozen entities to be transplanted from era to era. The organization of contemporary society cannot accommodate some traditional elements which are oppressive and contradictory - elements which need demystification. Traditional performing arts, for example, contain within them elements which propagate and perpetuate the oppression of women. The importance of sexual differences and the dependent position of women are elements which feature in some story-

telling performances. The situation is made more complex and aggravated by the participation of women as performers who popularize these elements of their own oppression.

Theatre during colonialism, however, was not only characterized by the disruptions in traditional performances or new organizational structures as well as audience in urban centres. Theatre activities were also affected by the introduction of western dramatic forms, forms which have made a great impact on theatre practice up to the present day.

3. Western Drama

Western drama as introduced in the then Tanganyika brought with it aesthetic features which stood, for the most part, in opposition to the aesthetics of traditional performances. The most important of these features was an element inherent within western drama as that mode of fiction designed for theatre performance with particular conventions which emphasize the character to character communication within the established fictional world of the drama. This feature brought with it conventions which made it possible to enclose the theatre event and establish different relationships between performer and audience. The proscenium framed the performed events of the drama which progressed through their own justifiable internal logic. The presented reality, therefore, did not necessarily need to be transcended nor could the performance necessarily fulfil needs outside

the performance. The focus on the character to character in the drama established the primacy of the individual and his psychology. This meant that the psychology of the society took second place to that of the individual and this informed the internal and external conflicts which the drama demanded. These were some of the aesthetic features which have played a considerable part in the development of theatre practice since the colonial times.

In his 'On the Development of Theatre in East Africa', Hussein has presented a detailed account of the introduction of Western drama forms in Tanzania.⁵⁰ There were two major channels that were used especially by the British to inculcate the aesthetics of Western drama. The first was through the schools where Victorian drawing room drama and Shakespeare were introduced in European, Asian and later in African schools in the early 1920s. By 1922 plays like Gow's The Sherrif's Kitchen, Milne's The Ugly Duckling and Francis' The Birds of a Feather were being performed in schools in Dar-es-Salaam.⁵¹ The reason why the schools were found to be a good outlet to popularize this drama was given by one Provincial Officer:

In general Africans lack initiative and application, as also experience in matters of this kind and I consider that our best line of approach is to encourage those educational agencies, both Government and Mission, which are under direct European⁵² guidance, to give a lead in the provisions of entertainment.

This encouragement came at a time when the introduced drama was developing very slowly. Between 1922 and the end of the 40s, drama as envisioned by the colonialists had not picked up the desired momentum. After 1949, however, there were fast developments and by 1952 almost

all schools were active in dramatics.⁵³ The works of not only Shakespeare, but Shaw and later Gilbert and Sullivan could be seen on many school stages. Besides encouraging teachers to use drama as an extra curricular activity, it was also made part of the English language or English literature syllabuses which were compulsory in any curriculum.

In 1957, the British Council inaugurated the Schools Drama Competition (later renamed the Youth Drama Festival). Schools were encouraged to enter plays which were judged according to the literary merits and the performance skills of the groups and individuals. The chosen plays also had to adhere to stipulated guidelines which included: they had to be in English; consist of at least three characters; must be a one act or extract of full length play; and not last more than 45 minutes. Elocution and proper speech, however, became dominant elements. Commenting on a typical Drama Competition event in East Africa, Peter Nazareth has said:

The adjudicators, like the teachers, would talk about diction, delivery, timing, pauses, clumsiness, etc., so that most of the indigenous actors and actresses who braved the stage were forced into a prepared mould of 'correct English' on the stage.⁵⁴

In most cases, how one spoke counted more than how one acted. The plays in the competition included such entries as The Birthday of the Infanta, White Queen Red Queen, and A Little Nut Tree. The competition as a method of popularizing drama became an important feature even after independence. In 1963, the British Council withdrew its support for the competitions and it was not until 1966



Western drama and aesthetics:

Figure 5: White Queen Red Queen, Marian College, (Kilakala Secondary School), Morogoro, 1962.



Figure 6: The Mikado, Marian College, Morogoro, 1961.

that they were revived by the Youth Drama Association based in Dar-es-Salaam. Besides schools, clubs were invited to participate. The competitions opened up to entries in Kiswahili as well as in English. Original plays, all in Kiswahili started to appear either in performance or playwriting competitions. Contributors included E.N. Hussein, G. UHINGA and F. Kutalambulla. The English entries, however, continued to be plays imported from Europe and their numbers exceeded those in Kiswahili by a small majority. Not only the schools continued to dominate the competitions but the choice of Dar-es-Salaam as venue favoured those groups near the capital. Out of the 10 groups which participated in the 1966 and 1967 competitions, for example, only one group came from outside Dar-es-Salaam and two were not educational institutions. English entries included J. Henshaw's Medicine for Love, G.B. Shaw's Pygmalion, William Barrow's End of Term and Yves Chabrol's The Fish. Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero and Henshaw's Medicine for Love became the first plays in English by Africans to be performed when they were both entered in 1967.⁵⁵

In spite of the enthusiasm and interest the competitions generated amongst their participants, some observers saw in them inhibiting factors which could affect theatre development in Tanzania. Acting as adjudicators to the 1969 Drama Competitions, John Carthew and Farouk Topan complained about the lack of rapport between performers and audience in most play entries of that year. They attributed part of the cause for this situation to the dependence 'of proscenium arch conventions' which created a poor actor-audience relationship. They

gave three recommendations in their report for future productions: emphasis on audience participation, abandonment of imported dramatic structures and an emphasis, on the part of the playwrights, on performance rather than literary objectives.⁵⁶ While these recommendations were noble, they seem not to have taken into account two factors which produced the type of plays they criticised. First of all, the schools were being exposed to no other alternative theatre forms except those within western dramatic conventions. The results of the Arusha Declaration's encouragement for traditional cultural expression were still in their infant stages of manifestation. Most participants, therefore, were relying on the familiar traditions of Western Drama. The second factor was the nature of the understanding of the Western dramatic convention in the schools. The expatriate teachers who taught drama in the schools were not themselves intimately conversant with the aesthetics and structures of the drama as a form. The native teachers were in an even worse position having received their knowledge from the expatriate teachers. The students and teachers who aspired to write plays using the Western dramatic model were faced with a serious lack of knowledge and skills in creating the dramas. And since little experimentation was attempted on drama in the schools, the writing aspirants had no alternative models.

Both the schools and the competitions provided Tanzanians' exposure to Western drama which has had a great impact on contemporary theatre practice. The competitions ceased by 1973 but its model was adopted later by the Ministry responsible for culture and continues to

be a familiar feature. Schools and the competitions, however, were not the only channels used to encourage drama in the colonial days. There was encouragement and support for theatre associations like the Dar-es-Salaam Players (1947) and the Arusha Little Theatre (1953). These were expatriate theatre groups which drew their membership from colonial administrators, officers, educators and their spouses. The groups could be found not only in Tanzania, but in such other places as Kenya, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia. The educated 'elites' were encouraged to attend the groups' performance and occasionally were given a chance to perform.

The aims of the Dar-es-Salaam Players (later renamed the Little Theatre) have been described thus:

The Little Theatre set out 'to promote and foster knowledge and appreciation of the arts' ... and in particular the dramatic and musical arts' and 'in furtherance of this to provide facilities for instruction and education in the above arts'.⁵⁷

While providing outlets for the propagation of Western drama, however, the expatriate theatre groups fulfilled another colonial need - that of providing entertainment for its white employees. Commenting on this in reference to Zambia, Chifunise has said:

While the colonial government and mining companies were not enthusiastic in providing the Africans with cultural and recreational facilities it was their main responsibility to make sure that their white recruits lived in the most comfortable and superior conditions to their home conditions.⁵⁸

Thus the theatre groups ensured a further separation between the expatriates and most of the native population and in a way reinforced racial segregation. The Little Theatres continue to exist in Tanzania

but they represent not only an anomaly in cultural activities, they are also regarded as being at the periphery of national cultural expression. They still continue to perform to their expatriate audience, whatever last season's performances at the West End and Broadway but they no longer play as important a role in shaping the country's theatre development.

Besides the expatriate drama clubs, there were also 'native groups' performing short plays and skits during the colonial era. Official records mention the existence of two groups, for example, one in Bagamoyo and one in Dar-es-Salaam. This latter group was so successful that officials labelled it 'professional'. It was said that these drama groups started 'with a minimum of encouragement while they are always a caricature of life manners. They are exceedingly popular sometimes they even make money for their organizations'.⁵⁹ The development of the activities of the native groups as well as theatre as a whole, however, was affected by another cultural expression - the film. The film can be said to have affected theatre in the colonial era on two counts: the film was officially more preferred than the drama and the film's influence on especially the short plays and skits popularly known as Vichekesho.*

To achieve a faster pace in education and culture, the film was a more preferred medium than the drama - a factor which diverted official

* Vichekesho comes from the Kiswahili verb Kuchekesha meaning to amuse or cause laughter. Kichekesho is the noun - that which amuses or causes laughter; the prefix vi denotes plural.

financial and moral support from the theatre to the films. The Government then pointed out:

... the cinema is perhaps the most potent and promising line of approach for the recreation and amusement of the people (to say nothing of its immense capacity for educational use) since modern film provides a valuable visual aid which is readily comprehensible by the literate and illiterate alike.⁶⁰

Besides the general educational and cultural objectives, the cinema was seen as a means to support and increase economic production. Moreover, the increase of wage earners and moneyed peasants meant the government could benefit from film revenues as more peasants paid to go to the cinema. There was also the question of control and personnel. Unlike the theatre, films could technically be more controlled and the final product was thus more predictable. Film was also seen as a cheaper venture as it needed a small initial investment and a few people to run the projects. So, film more than theatre received Government support.⁶¹

The influence of film on Vichekesho is difficult to document because of two reasons. First of all forms of Vichekesho have been seen to exist prior to the introduction of film. Secondly, the unavailability of Vichekesho prior to film has made a comparative study impossible. That there was cross fertilization between the comedy plays and film is evidenced by two factors: the accessibility of films to those who were also active in performing Vichekesho and similarities between the forms and content of films and Vichekesho especially in the 40s and 50s.

Hussein has tried to establish that Vichekesho followed two

different developments. The first type was that which developed in Zanzibar at the turn of the century and was popularized by such performers as Siti binti Saad and Bakari Abedi. This type of Vichekesho later spread to other places such as Tanga, Dodoma and later Dar-es-Salaam. The comedy skits were used as interludes during Taarab* performances.⁶² The second and more familiar trend in the development of Vichekesho is that which can be seen as the result of school drama popularized by clubs of local players. These two trends, however, were both urban based in spite of the fact that they were practised by different social groups. The eclectic nature of the urban society no doubt made interaction between groups possible. It was also possible that elements from films especially comedies strengthened or introduced new items in Vichekesho practised by the groups.

Film was introduced in the then Tanganyika in 1922 and by 1937 it was clear what types of films were being shown in the country:

The question as how far entertainment films for the natives should include thrills and knock about farce has raised a certain amount of controversy and some pronouncement on this subject from those responsible for policy will be required. It is essential that comedy and farce should be kept clean, but the native who knows them loves his Charlie Chaplin and his Harold Lloyd and there seems to be no reason why these and their possible African equivalent should be withheld.⁶³

In spite of the fear of the moral implications on such films, comedy was officially seen as good for the Africans as evidenced by the

* Taarab is a musical form with Arabic and Asian music elements popular especially in East Africa. Forms of it can be found in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, amongst others.

following statement in 1938:

It is increasingly evident that the greater part of programmes must consist of wisely selected European pictures of the comedy (slapstick) and newsreel type.⁶⁴

Besides the imported films there were also after 1953 films produced within the country. Not only did 'natives' participate as actors in these films but comedy was seen as an essential element in them. One producer of such films reported:

The missing element in the film, so far, was comedy but a clever native comedian was engaged and by putting him as the hero's friend, we saw plenty of chances for humour as the story developed.⁶⁵

One such player known as the 'funny man' was one Shabani bin Yusif who is said to have played 'mainly for the part of the fool or ignoramus who learns wisdom'.⁶⁶ Such films as 'The Post Office', 'The Tax' and 'The Chief', 'Muhogo Mchungu' and 'Chalo Amerudi' featured such fools who later learn wisdom.⁶⁷

The films were mostly shown in the urban areas where groups, as early as 1919, were observed to 'love to give parodies of incidents or phases of European life in its contact with the native ... depicted in the form of light comedy with the laugh against the ignorant or inexperienced blackman'.⁶⁸ What the films did was to re-emphasize these values and provide an exposure to a wider audience who then adopted them in their performances. It was in the schools and the clubs that Vichekesho found its greatest exponents. Taking themes from either social reality or traditional stories, participants improvised a sketch. In the schools, the material was chosen to

accommodate the abilities of the students without much supervision from their teachers. Rehearsals were minimal and dialogues were almost always in Kiswahili. It was colonialism, however, that gave Vichekesho its distinctive characteristic. It was a form that upheld the position and superior culture of the West against the native population. A common Vichekesho skit went like this:

A man is informed that his child needs school fees and unless he sends it before a certain day, the child will be expelled from school. The man desperately tries to get the money together which he is told he can send by telegram. He goes and buries the money under a telegraph pole and is surprised when he is told it has not reached its destination. So he goes, digs up the money and decides to take it to school himself. He learns that he can get to where he is going quickly if he travels by a 'long black thing which emits smoke'. When a tall black man appears smoking a cigarette, the traveller jumps on his back amidst protestations and abuse. ⁶⁹

Besides using objects of a European nature to expose the ignorance of the African, there were many Vichekesho based on language misunderstanding. In these, a European or an African who could speak English had to deal with an African who couldn't and laughter was directed towards the ignorant. Not only the colonists but the educated Tanzanians patronized Vichekesho. The form on the whole reflected the type of contempt held against 'the uncivilized, uneducated' population whose plight was the centre of abuse and laughter. It was partly an attempt by the educated to show how divorced they themselves were from the kinds of 'stupidities' and 'heathen' practices of their immediate past while wondering how anybody could allow such situations to exist. The Europeans loved this kind of 'fun' which justified

their work at 'civilizing' the African as worthwhile. There is a difference here between comic drama in traditional performances where the ludicrous nature of events and attitudes, the incongruities arising between the ideal and the actual, between character behaviour and community expectation, were for the most part situated within the internal rhythms of a society's life. The performer laughed for the benefit of the whole society whose development of consciousness and social cohesiveness was everybody's concern. Vichekesho provided a finger pointing entertainment for the privileged few. They sneered at the underprivileged majority and were eager to show the tools and products of their privileged position to the masters who had made it possible for them. Through laughter, they created a thicker wall between 'them' and 'us'. Fanon has pointed out that self hate is a product of colonialism in the colonised man.⁷⁰ There was a destructive element in the laughter of some of the Vichekesho which was a self-rejection process arising from self contempt.

Vichekesho had another negative effect on theatre performances - entertainment for laughter only. Being the only visible and accessible theatre form especially in urban areas and educational institutions, there was a tendency to adopt Vichekesho, after English drama, as the ideal type. The concept of entertainment in the theatre came to be associated with Vichekesho and the colonists were quick to equate the absence of this form as the absence of theatre as evidenced in the following statement:

There is no doubt a need for more organized entertainment in

the outlying areas for Africans, while in towns the entertainment is there, though it may require co-ordinating and direction. For instance, on any day of the week in Dar-es-Salaam the African can find some kind of entertainment ready at hand but in a place like Songea, any kind of entertainment is rare.⁷¹

Not all Vichekesho dealt with abuse. Sometimes folk-tales were adapted to teach specific morals and attitudes. For example, the adventures of the hare or that of the hyena were presented in a Vichekesho style to show the evils of laziness or the advantages of a quick wit. From Vichekesho, students learned the technicalities of realistic dramatic presentation using costumes, dialogues, props and whenever possible lighting. The loose and improvisational style of Vichekesho was also applied to themes dealt with in a serious manner. The outcome was melodramatic skits in which emotions and characterization were exaggerated to draw out tears and create empathy. These melodramas took their material from reality or traditional tales and legends. Even here, there was always an attempt at including comedic elements in the manner of other Vichekesho.

Vichekesho continue to exist in Tanzania but after independence and especially after 1967, Vichekesho gained new functions. While retaining some characteristics of the former Vichekesho, the didactic nature of Vichekesho after the Arusha Declaration has provided new aesthetic considerations. As early as 1969, it was evident that Vichekesho was incorporating new objectives. In that year, Bakari Abedi described the purpose of Vichekesho as to 'make people laugh at the corrupt side of life and in that way then adopt a correct attitude

to both work and leisure.⁷² How Vichekesho has been able to live up to its new functions and the aesthetic considerations of Vichekesho as a form are elements discussed in a section in Chapter 4.

4. Kiswahili Language and Poetry

Kiswahili is the national language of Tanzania and some observers see it as having attained the status of a people's language. It has permeated every aspect of the day to day existence of all citizens. Even those for whom Kiswahili is a second language, to use or not to use it for communication is a matter of choice rather than ignorance. As national rather than ethnic aspiration becomes demanding, the use of Kiswahili has become a matter of practicality and necessity. Rising from the coastal strip of Kenya and Tanzania as well as the islands of Lamu, Pemba and Zanzibar, Kiswahili spread inland through Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, across lake Tanganyika to Zaire. It penetrated Mozambique, parts of Malawi, Zambia, Ruanda and Burundi.⁷³ The spread of Kiswahili during the colonial era was facilitated by traders, the government and the missionaries, each for its own purpose. Both the German and English colonists used Kiswahili to carry out their colonial policies. The missionaries saw it as a convenient tool to spread Christianity. Writing in 1870, Bishop Steere urged:

There is no other way ... of spreading the Gospel faster and better than in the use of the language of Zanzibar (Kiswahili).⁷⁴

Although at present Kiswahili is the national language of only

Tanzania, it is being taught in schools in Kenya and Uganda and according to Ali Mazrui, it is on its way to conquer not only the cities of East Africa but also the leadership, business and scholarship elements there.⁷⁵ What is shown at the moment is an emergence of a new alternative to the metropolitan languages offering possibilities for a wider local and international audience. As Adrian Roscoe has put it:

... if a writer sees that there is a growing audience for works in his own language and finds publishers prepared to produce books for this market, he is likely to find the attractions of English as his chosen medium suddenly weaker.⁷⁶

For the literature but most important for theatre the choice of language becomes crucial. The fact that most Tanzanian writers and theatre practitioners have opted to use Kiswahili has made the accessibility of the works to both literate and non-literate sections of the Tanzanian populace easier. The utilization of Kiswahili as a medium which tries to reduce the dualistic cleavage between itself and the metropolitan languages is not its only important achievement.⁷⁷

Those who write and work in Kiswahili provide the link between the old traditional artistic structures and the new national theatre and social aspirations. The dynamism of the language arises from both the necessity to incorporate new social awareness and the practices which in their turn express the new social and political consciousness. The Arusha Declaration provided writers and performers not only with subject matter for their themes but also opened up new areas for the Kiswahili to develop as a language. Kiswahili is a malleable language and this asset made it possible for it to quickly become part of the

political climate both morphologically and lexically.⁷⁸ As a result, new terminologies sprung up to accommodate the new political and economic ideas. Words like imperialism, neo-colonialism, exploitation, oppression etc. soon found their Kiswahili equivalent. The dissemination of these words was carried out by poets, playwrights and performers. They not only used the new words but at times endowed old words with new meaning. As a result, the Kiswahili language has seen a rapid growth after the Arusha Declaration.

The adoption of Kiswahili as a national language in 1967 can also be seen as a political symbolic gesture with two cultural components. First of all, Kiswahili played an important part during the struggle for independence and its adoption was a recognition and acknowledgement of this historic fact. Kiswahili's adoption also fitted in with the Arusha Declaration's objective in the discouragement of class divisions within society. Kiswahili would discourage the development of a national elite who communicated through a foreign language - English. The impact of Kiswahili is evidenced in the fact that most of the theatre performances or writing discussed in this study are in that language. It was not a matter of selection but lies within the fact that anything which is not in Kiswahili is hard to come by. For the theatre practitioners, however, the choice of Kiswahili has not only a political angle to it but an aesthetic one as well. Asked why she chooses to write in Kiswahili, Penino O. Mlama answered:

I write in Swahili for two main reasons. First of all because the audience I am addressing is a Swahili-speaking audience, ... and the second reason is that I can express

myself better in Swahili.⁷⁹

The same can be said about E.N. Hussein who is fluent in German, English and French but has opted for Kiswahili. The other writers might not have as much a choice as Hussein's but they all show a political and aesthetic commitment to use the language. This commitment is influenced by both their target for their work and Kiswahili providing the best tool to effect the communication they want.

Another element to be considered in the output of theatre material is the presence of Kiswahili poetry. There are two traditions of Kiswahili poetry recognized by scholars. The first is the Islamic poetry of long religious works initially introduced by foreigners and later picked up by the inhabitants of the coast of Tanzania. The second is of a secular and local origin dealing with contemporary issues and allusions. Harries compares the two thus:

... there can be no doubt that the less ambitious verse of the Africans represented a more lively tradition than the verse introduced by the Arabs, even though long poems after the model of the verses were written on such subjects as the Majimaji Rebellion of 1905 and the African opposition to the German administration in the last decade of the last century.⁸⁰

Traditional Kiswahili poetry was highly conventionalized. The rhythms were heavy and syllabic measure fixed. The poems were written to be sung by orator poets who were regarded custodians of wisdom and religious or secular interests. There have been, however, attempts to break the conventions of traditional poetry and this is more evidenced in not only some of the contemporary poems but the poetry used in the plays. Writers like Hussein and Mlama have written free verse poems

in their plays which reflect this new direction in spite of the opposition from traditionalists. Several characteristics however, are shared by both traditional and non-traditional poetry. One is the influence of oral African tradition in Kiswahili versification:

The word play of tongue twisters; the comparisons, oppositional and non oppositional, underlying riddles; epigrams and proverbs; the elaboration and direct use of aphorisms; the lexical variants of individual words; the various stylistic devices found in epigrams; and the more serious nature of proverbs and epigrams, all are features of African oral tradition, and all are to be found in Swahili poetry.⁸¹

Kiswahili speakers judge a poem by the content but more especially by the handling of the language in the poem. A dramatist like Hussein or a poet like Abdilatif Abdallah are popular with Kiswahili speakers not only because of the themes they handle but because of the facility and mastery of the language they display. There are two other characteristics of Kiswahili poems. The first is what Harries calls 'literary riddling' where several stanzas are used to pose a riddle and then an equal number of stanzas answer the riddle.⁸² A good example is the extended riddle technique which Hussein adopts in both Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi which pose riddles but do not answer them. Part of the answers have been built within the riddles themselves.

Theatre practitioners and writers who mostly use Kiswahili in Tanzania are aware of these linguistic and poetic features of the language. Some have consciously used these features to perform and stimulate alongside the other elements of theatre to create an aural experience. The growing popularity in Kiswahili poetry, for example,

can be seen in the development of the poetic drama form, Ngonjera, as well as in the use of poetry as a major feature in many plays since 1967. But besides the aesthetic considerations, the choice to use Kiswahili for the theatre is also both a social and political choice especially in a continent where metropolitan languages present alternatives.

Most of the theatre works discussed in this thesis are available only in Kiswahili. Except for Ebrahim Hussein's Kinjeketile (Chapter 3), Mukotani Rugyendo's The Contest and Farouk Topan's A Taste of Heaven (Chapter 4), the translations of the plays, Ngonjera etc. have been done by this writer.

Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 Keir Elam, The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama, Methuen, London and New York, 1980, p.2.
- 2 See Kazimier Dobrowolski, 'Peasantry as a Culture' in Teodor Shanin, ed. Peasant and Peasant Societies, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1973, p.281.
- 3 Ruth Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, Oxford, 1970, p.2.
- 4 Adolfo S. Vasquez, 1973, p.92.
- 5 Scott Kennedy, In Search of African Theatre, C. Scribner's and Sons, New York, 1973, p.86.
- 6 Okot pBitek, Religion of the Central Luo, EALB, Nairobi, 1971, p.84.
- 7 Oyin Ogunba, 'Traditional African Festival Drama' in Oyin Ogunba and Abiola Irele, ed., Theatre in Africa, Ibadan, 1978, p.22.
- 8 Kazimier Dobrowolski in Shanin, 1973, p.278.
- 9 Unyago is the general term for girls' initiation ceremonies with specific names like 'digubi' in parts of Morogoro Region.
- 10 See Penina O. Mlama, 'Digubi: A Tanzanian Indigenous Theatre Form', in The Drama Review, vol.25, no.4., New York, 1981, pp.3-12.
- 11 On the symbolism in Chinese art and theatre, see for example, Pan Jiezi, 'The Art of Chinese Painting' in Chinese Literature Today, March 1980, also, Colin Mackerras, The Chinese Theatre in Modern Times, From 1946 to the Present Day, London, 1975.
- 12 Victor W. Turner, The Ritual Process, Chauser, 1965, p.15.
- 13 Information from performances attended.
- 14 John Iliffe, A Modern History of Tanganyika, Cambridge, 1979, p.31.

- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Dan Ben-Amos, 'Folklore in African Society' in Forms of Folklore in Africa, Narrative, Poetic, Gnostic, Dramatic; B. Lindfors, ed., Austin, 1977, pp.1-2.
- 17 Francoise Grund-Khaznader, 'Masked Dances and Ritual in Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia', in The Drama Review, Vol. 25, no.4., 1981, p.28.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 From ceremonies attended. See also E.N. Hussein, 'On the Development of Theatre in East Africa', Ph.D. thesis, Humbolt University, 1975; Marja-Liisa Swantz, Ritual and Symbol in Transitional Zaramo Society with Special Reference to Women. Lund, 1970.
- 20 Dan Ben-Amos, op.cit., p.18.
- 21 See J. Adedeji, 'Form and Function of Satire in Yoruba Drama', in Journal of African Studies, Vol.4, no.1., July 1967.
- 22 From attended functions in Morogoro and Dar-es-Salaam Regions.
- 23 A.C. Jordan, 'Towards an African Literature: Traditional Poetry', Africa South, Vol.2, no.1., 1957, p.101.
- 24 Mazisi Kunene, Anthem of the Decades, London, 1981, p.xxxi.
- 25 See Ruth Finnegan, op.cit., p.135.
- 26 Mazisi Kunene, The Heroic Poetry of the Basotho, Oxford, 1971, p.4.
- 27 See F.J. Kaijage, 'Kyamutwara: A Pre-Colonial Buhaya Kingdom', The Journal of World History, Vol.XIII, no.3., 1971. Material used here was available from an earlier paper (mimeo) obtained from the Department of History, University of Dar-es-Salaam. See also Peter R. Schmidt, 'An Investigation of Early and Late Iron Age Cultures through Oral Tradition and Archaeology: an interdisciplinary case study in Buhaya, Tanzania', Ph.D. thesis, Northwestern University, 1974.
- 28 M. Ruyendo, 'Towards a Truly African Theatre', Umma, Vol.4, no.2., 1974, p.65.

- 29 F.H. Morris, The Heroic Recitations of the Bahima of Ankole, Oxford, 1964, p.21.
- 30 From 'Heroic Recitations of the Bahaya', Special study paper, Department of Literature, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1978 (unpublished). The Departments of Literature and Art, Music and Theatre have conducted several researches in heroic recitations since the early 70s and the material is available courtesy of the Departments.
- 31 See J. Adediji, 'Traditional Yoruba Theatre', African Arts, Vol.IX, no.2., 1976.
- 32 Extract from Report of Group V, Cambridge Summer Conference, 1948, in TNA/38813.
- 33 TNA/38813. See Figure 1.
- 34 From Colonial Office to Secretariat in Dar-es-Salaam, 31/1/1949 in TNA/38813.
- 35 From Provincial Office, Arusha to Chief Secretary to Government, 26/2/1949 in TNA/38813.
- 36 From correspondence of 24/3/1946 and 6/4/1946 in TNA/38813.
- 37 See John Iliffe, op.cit.
- 38 J.A.K. Leslie, A Survey of Dar-es-Salaam, London, 1963.
- 39 John Iliffe, 1979, pp.384-395.
- 40 From interview with Mzee D.L. Kombani, Dar-es-Salaam, February, 1984. For 'Ngoma' see Figures 2-4.
- 41 T.O. Ranger, Dance and Society in Eastern Africa 1890-1970: the Beni 'Ngoma', London, 1975, p.44.
- 42 Even though Beni declined by the late 30s, there are dances today which bear a close resemblance e.g. Mganda, Lipenenga. See Figure 3.
- 43 Quoted in T.O. Ranger, 1975, p.125.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Ibid., p.44.

- 46 When Beni was banned, some members who were in government service joined the Tanganyika Territory African Civil Service Association. Later, some of these were members of Tanganyika African Association which became the forerunner to TANU; see both Ranger 1975 and Iliffe 1979, op.cit.
- 47 Interview with Mzee D.L. Kombani, Dar-es-Salaam, February, 1984.
- 48 See John Iliffe, op.cit., pp.216-236.
- 49 P.O. Mlama, 'African Theatre: the case of Tanzania', University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1981 (unpublished), p.216.
- 50 E.N. Hussein, op.cit., Chapter 2.
- 51 Ibid., p.32.
- 52 From Provincial Office Mbeya to F.A. Montague, Secretariat, Dar-es-Salaam, 3/3/1949 in TNA/38813.
- 53 See E.N. Hussein, op.cit., pp.48-49.
- 54 Peter Nazareth in Oyin Ogunba, 1978, p.93.
- 55 I owe this information to the files of the Youth Drama Association, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1965-1976.
- 56 John Carthew and Farouk Topan, 'Drama in Tanzanian Schools'. Tanzanian Notes and Records, no.70, 1969.
- 57 E.N. Hussein, op.cit., p.38.
- 58 Stephen J. Chifunise, 'The Formative Years (an analysis of the Development of Theatre in Zambia from 1950 to 1970)' staff paper, University of Zambia, 1978, pp.39-40.
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- 60 Ibid.
- 61 On film, see L.A. Notcutt and G.C. Latham, The African Cinema: an account of the Work of the Bantu Educational Cinema Experiment during the period March 1935 to May 1937, London, 1937, p.107.
- 62 See E.N. Hussein, op.cit., pp.96-100.
- 63 TNA/20496.

- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Notcutt and Latham, op.cit., p.41.
- 66 Ibid., p.144.
- 67 For a discussion on these films see Adelhelm J. Mponguliana, 'The Role of Film in Tanzania', M.A. Thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 68 T.O. Ranger, op.cit., p.75.
- 69 This was a popular Kichekesho in the 1950s and early 60s.
- 70 See Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, Harmondsworth, 1967.
- 71 TNA/38813.
- 72 The Standard, Dar-es-Salaam, 12/3/1969.
- 73 See A.M. Khamisi, 'Swahili as a National Language', in G. Ruhumbika, ed., Towards Ujamaa, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974, pp.288-308; also W.H. Whiteley, Swahili: The Rise of a National Language, London, 1969; Lugha ya Kiswahili: Makala za Semina ya Kimataifa ya Waandishi wa Kiswahili, Vol.I, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1983, especially pp.1-112.
- 74 E. Steere (Bishop) as quoted by M. Mulokoni, 'Maendeleo na Matatizo ya Uchapishaji wa Vitabu vya Kiswahili' in Uandishi na Uchapishaji: Makala za Semina ya Kimataifa ya Waandishi wa Kiswahili, Vol.II, Dar-es-Salaam, 1983, p.129 (my translation).
- 75 See A. Mazrui, African Report, June, 1967.
- 76 Adrian Roscoe, Uhuru's Fire, Cambridge, 1977, p.4.
- 77 This argument was put forward by Ali Mazrui in his 'Aesthetics Dualism and Creative Literature in East Africa' in Zirimu and Gurr, eds., Black Aesthetics, Nairobi, 1973, pp.32-51.
- 78 For a discussion on Kiswahili linguistics, see the several papers in Lugha ya Kiswahili, 1983, op.cit.
- 79 Penina Mlama, an interview, in Conversations with African Writers,

Voice of America, Washington D.C., 1981, p.139.
Mlama has emphasized this point during numerous discussions with this writer.

80 Lyndon Harries, 'Swahili Literature in the National Context' in Albert S. Gerard, ed., Black Africa, New York, 1972, p.38.

81 Ibid., p.53.

82 Ibid., p.54.

CHAPTER 2

THE ARUSHA DECLARATION AND CULTURAL CHANGE

We have been oppressed a great deal, we have been exploited a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now we want a revolution - a revolution which brings to an end our weakness, so that we are never again exploited, oppressed or humiliated.

(The Arusha Declaration)

For the purpose of this study, the Arusha Declaration is taken to be a set of policy proclamations given from February to September 1967 which initiated and then expanded the ideas contained in the original declaration at Arusha. The policies include The Arusha Declaration: Socialism and Self-Reliance (5th February 1967), Education for Self-Reliance (March 1967) and Socialism and Rural Development (September 1967). These collectively laid the foundation for the socialist revolution mentioned in the passage above. This chapter looks at the Arusha Declaration, its aims and objectives as well as the subsequent policies and events after 1967 which tried to translate the Declaration into a practical transformation towards Tanzania's socialism - Ujamaa. There have been, however, factors which have been both favourable and unfavourable in implementing the Arusha Declaration. The Tanzanian

reality after 1967, then can be seen on two levels: the reality engendered by the struggle to make Ujamaa a dominant factor in social practice and the reality which is the result of a conflict between this struggle and inhibiting factors in social practice which have worked against the attainment of Arusha's objectives. Within these two levels of reality lies both the source material of theatre practice after 1967 as well as the explanation behind the nature of theatre response after the Arusha Declaration. But the nature of theatre has been informed also by ideological and theoretical approaches of those who have practised theatre in the period under discussion. The second part of this chapter analyses these approaches and how they link to the ideas of the Arusha Declaration and influenced the type of plays and performances produced.

1. The Arusha Declaration: Policy and Implementation

On January 29th 1967, the ruling party Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) met in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha and declared, 'The policy of TANU is to build a socialist state'. TANU's objectives as spelt out in the Arusha Declaration can be summarized as follows:

1. To consolidate the country's independence and freedom by ensuring that there is a democratic government which will give equal opportunity to all and assist in the formation and maintenance of co-operative organizations.
2. To eradicate all type of exploitation, discrimination,

corruption, poverty, ignorance and disease.

3. To safeguard human rights and work towards world peace, the liberation of and unity of the whole of Africa.

All these, TANU hoped to achieve through the socialist state which was based on the traditional concept of Ujamaa.² This socialist state would have many distinct characteristics amongst which will be equality. This society 'does not have two classes of people, a lower class composed of people who work for their living, and an upper class of people who live on the work of others'.³ To reach this goal exploitation of one man by another will be eliminated. All men must work to earn their living so that there will be only two categories of people, peasants and workers. This equality in work was seen in not only the participation of all able-bodied men and women in work but also through just payment for the work done:

We say then, that in a really socialist country, all people work, all receive just payment for their work and payment for different work, what different workers receive does not differ because their needs do not differ very much.⁴

Democracy was another characteristic of a socialist state which received much attention in the declarations of 1967:

For a country to be socialist it is essential that its government is chosen and led by the peasants and workers themselves.⁵

Democracy also entails parties and public institutions to be in the hands of the people. It also means that people's participation in their work, in decisions that affect them and overall development. But the people cannot exercise this democracy if the instruments of

production and exchange are not in their hands. Therefore it was declared that to build and maintain socialism, it is essential that all the major means of production and exchange in the nation should be controlled and owned by the people through the 'machinery of their government and their co-operatives'.⁶ These means of production included land and its products, major industries and commercial enterprises.

What separated the Arusha Proclamations from previous policy statements after independence was the emphasis on self-reliance. This was meant to inculcate in the people's minds that the development of the country was their responsibility; no amount of aid from the outside was going to help if the people themselves did not accept the task for development. Moreover, gifts and loans were dangerous to independence and freedom.⁷ Development will depend less on money and more on people, the land, good policies and leadership. Both Education for Self-Reliance and Socialism and Rural Development were the elaboration of the concept of self-reliance which put an emphasis on land and agriculture while ensuring that ideological channels were used for the formation and propagation of the concept.

The manifesto, Education for Self-Reliance was issued on March 9th 1967, almost a month after the original Arusha Declaration. In it the basis was laid to integrate education and life, and education and production. The guiding principle would be socialism and self-reliance. Ngugi has defined education and its purpose in the same way that Education for Self-Reliance was envisioned:

Education is the process of integrating the youth into the entire system of production, exchange and distribution of what we eat, wear and shelter under, the whole system of organizing the wealth of a given country. It does so (i) by imparting knowledge about the two basic relations on which the entire society including its culture is erected ... and (ii) by imparting a certain outlook or attitude ...⁸

The purpose of Education for Self-Reliance was to foster social goals of living together, working together and preparing the youth of the nation to play a constructive and dynamic role in the development of the country. The schools would inculcate the young with Ujamaa and self-reliance to produce skilled hardworking, active thinkers and innovators. Elitism, class privileges, scorn for rural life and the alienation that comes as a result of these were to be fought in and out of the classroom. The strategy will be to change both the content and organization of the school system to make education relevant to Tanzania's present and future goals:

The education provided by Tanzania for the students of Tanzania must serve the purposes of Tanzania. It must encourage the growth of the socialist values we aspire to.⁹

Amongst the major changes suggested for the education system were:

1. Syllabuses were to cater to the needs of Tanzania which would mean a focus on agriculture on primary and secondary levels because Tanzania is an agricultural country.
2. Evaluation of students would combine work done in the classroom and work done outside the classroom for the school and community.
3. African traditional cultural values and expression were to be emphasized.

These were reiterated in Socialism and Rural Development when

Nyerere said:

For the foreseeable future the vast majority of our people will continue to spend their lives in the rural areas and continue to work on the land. The land is the only basis for Tanzania's development; ... Tanzanian socialism must be firmly based on the land and its workers.¹⁰

It was then proposed to move Tanzania 'from being a nation of individual peasant producers who are gradually adopting capitalist incentives and ethics' to a nation of 'ujamaa villages where the people co-operate directly in small groups and where these small groups co-operate together for joint enterprises'.¹¹

One of the most important features in all three policy statements was the call to base the proposed socialism on traditional African values. Many times before and after Arusha, Nyerere pointed out over and over again why Ujamaa was 'the rational choice' for Tanzania not only because socialism was the only answer to development in the Third World but also because the major features of Ujamaa are not new to Tanzania:

We in Africa have no more need of being 'converted' to socialism than we have of being 'taught' democracy. Both are rooted in our past - in the traditional society which produced us.¹²

From traditional society Nyerere was advocating the adoption of its organizational values; democracy, social security, human dignity and communalism. He saw the non-exploitative nature of traditional societies as a valuable feature to be followed so that a man was evaluated only according to his capacity to work and the contribution he makes to the social good. Nyerere was very categorical in

rejecting 'other forms' of socialism because he claimed they were not appropriate for Tanzania. On Marxism or scientific socialism, Nyerere had this to say:

Africa's conditions are very different from those of the Europe in which Marx and Lenin wrote and worked. To talk as if these thinkers provided all the answers to our problems, or as if Marx invented socialism, is to reject both the humanity of Africa and the universality of socialism.¹³

Besides recognizing that the traditional past had lessons to offer Nyerere was also trying to redeem this past from obscurity and rejection. Earlier during his presidential inaugural address in 1962 he had pointed out:

Of all the crimes of colonialism there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe we had no indigenous culture of our own; or that what we did have was worthless.¹⁴

The past would be redeemed not only to serve the economic and political structures of the new society but it would be the very basis of the relations between individuals and groups and these to the whole society.

Many have pointed out that Tanzania's decision to go towards socialism was a historic occasion at least in Africa and the Third World.¹⁵ One of these was Bienen who has pointed out:

Taken as a whole, however, Arusha does mark a new departure in African politics. It is important, but not because of a peculiar originality or because Nyerere has put together ideas and policies in a systematic form. He has not. Its significance is that a national leader has examined the critical issues of development in Africa and has announced steps to meet them.¹⁶

What Bienen leaves out in his observation is the fact that the Arusha Declaration was necessary at that point in Tanzania. A look at

Tanzania's history up to 1967 will show why Tanzania had to opt for socialism and change the course of its development.

At the time of independence on December 9th 1961, the Tanzanian society was comprised of about 120 tribes (and still is), mostly living in the rural areas and some in towns where there were also some Asians, Arabs and Europeans. After an easy independence which was led by TANU and supported by the great majority of the people, time had arrived to take stock of the colonial inheritance. The revelations were grim and pessimistic. The masses were living at the edge of poverty, exploited by a few who dominated either the government or commerce. 'While the economy contained a small commercial sector based on the export of cash crops, productive forces remained heavily engaged in near-subsistence agriculture'.¹⁷

Everywhere, there were social cleavages which divided the country between the haves and have nots. Advantages were enjoyed by European and Asian minorities at the expense of the African majority; the educated exploited the non-educated, the urban dwellers had advantages over the rural population. Education, political and even international aid tended to reinforce the existing gaps. The colonial government did not favour Tanzania the same way it did Kenya or Zambia and therefore by 1961 the country was left without lucrative, exploitable resources. There was disease and widespread illiteracy. The mass euphoria which had greeted independence understandably dissipated in the face of these hard facts. Moreover, external pressures were contributing to the already existing problems. Tanzania's commitment

was called for the Pan-Africanist movement and liberation struggles in Africa and Asia. United Kingdom, West Germany and the United States curtailed aid because of disputes over foreign policy¹⁸ limiting Tanzania's resources for development and its ability to secure personnel for implementation of objectives. In the meantime people became impatient for development. They wanted better prices for crops, more medical facilities, more and better schools, better communication systems and generally better access to the fruits of independence.

The government and Party tried to tackle some of these problems even before the Arusha Declaration. The institutionalization of the one party system in 1965, for example was meant to ensure more democracy.

Nyerere argued:

... where there is one party, provided it is identified with the nation as a whole, the foundations of democracy can be firmer, and the people can have more opportunity to exercise a real choice, than where you have two or more parties, each representing only a section of the community.¹⁹

On the economic front, the implementation of the Five Year Plan for 1964 to 1969 was meant to raise the per capita income as well as direct resources to tackle problems of health care, education and agriculture.²⁰ But by 1966, however, it was evident that the economic and cultural gap was widening and something else needed to be done.

Nyerere's ideas also which crystalized in 1967 were part of ideas and events given much attention prior to the Arusha Declaration. As early as 1962 Nyerere wrote:

Socialism like democracy, is an attitude of mind. In a socialist society it is the socialist attitude of mind, and

not the rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed to ensure that the people care for each other's welfare.²¹

But by 1966, he must have changed his mind and realized that socialist development needed more than an attitude of mind and the Arusha Declaration has to be seen as a new emphasis towards structural change in the economic, social and political processes.

On January 12th, 1964, the Zanzibari revolution overthrew the government of the Sultan and embarked on policies that were more socialist than those pursued on the mainland.²² Three months later a union was declared between the island and the mainland to form the United Republic of Tanzania. This political move must have influenced Tanzania to evaluate both its internal and foreign policies and come out in favour of a socialist mode of development.²³

Events outside Tanzania as well encouraged Nyerere to move towards socialism and a cultural revolution. In 1966 the Chinese Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution had begun. In February 1965 Nyerere had visited China and was highly impressed by not only the determination of the Chinese people to solve their own problems but also by the frugality they had adopted in the process. He admired the 'discipline and the intelligent application of policies to the needs and circumstances of the country and the time'.²⁴ Nyerere thought that Tanzania could learn from China's agricultural communes. 'Their experience could promote thought and ideas about our own rural organization'. But unlike China, Nyerere shied away from a 'violent' cultural transformation arguing that a violent revolution might bring

about socialist institutions but it makes it difficult to develop socialist attitudes because of the bitterness, suspicion and hostilities which are inevitable legacies of a revolution.²⁵

Another example which might have influenced Nyerere was Cuba's revolution especially in education. 'Do the Cuban experiments in adult education have nothing to teach us?' he had asked in 1965. He also saw things to learn from the Co-operative Settlements in Israel, and co-operative organization of Denmark and Sweden.²⁶ Encouraged by the fact that if socialist cultural change was possible elsewhere it should also be possible for Tanzania, Nyerere moved to inaugurate the experiment. But more important than this, burdened with economic, political and cultural problems magnified by internal and external pressures, the stage was set for the Arusha Declaration and the subsequent moves towards Ujamaa. The Tanzanian population received the Arusha Declaration with enthusiasm and showed their support by holding mass rallies, long distance marches and public performances.²⁷ Within a week of the Arusha Declaration the government nationalized banks, insurance, trade, import-export companies and moved to acquire controlling shares in several manufacturing firms and plantations. This was followed up by the creation of institutions which would manage the economy correctly.²⁸ The result was 'much greater public control over salary and wage structures, an assurance that profits (when they are made) will be available for reinvestment in Tanzania'.²⁹ The announcement of Education for Self-Reliance and Socialism and Rural Development laid the foundations for the formation and

maintenance of a socialist ideology as well as rural development. A new agriculturally based syllabus was introduced in the primary schools and agricultural secondary schools were increased, political education replaced civics, examinations were formulated in accordance with Education for Self-Reliance, adult education was accelerated to eradicate illiteracy and the whole system opened up so that educators, tutors and pupils could participate.³⁰ In 1968 the government announced its intention to achieve Universal Primary Education by 1989 but in 1974, however, because of the need for quicker results, the date was changed to 1974-6.³¹ Schools embarked on self-reliance schemes and funds were budgeted for the projects.³²

To encourage more participation of workers and eradicate authoritarianism at all places of work the Mwongozo guidelines were introduced in 1971.³³ The pace to bring about rural development picked up after September 1967. The strategy was centred around the establishment of Ujamaa villages all over the country. The Second Five Year Plan (1969-74) reflected enormous emphasis of Ujamaa living in rural areas where traditional values of respect, communality and obligation to work would be exploited.³⁴ But by 1973 the decision to move in Ujamaa villages was no longer voluntary as the party TANU decreed that all rural Tanzanians must live in clustered villages by 1976.³⁵ Before the villagization operations of 1973, the government had introduced decentralization to get administration and planning, especially of the rural areas, closer to the people. The years after the Arusha Declaration saw also the crystallization of the supremacy of

the party. The Interim Constitution of Tanzania (Amendment) Act of 1975 'reaffirmed the country's status as a one party state and established the full legal supremacy of the party (TANU)'.³⁶ In 1977, TANU and ASP joined to form Chama Cha Mapinduzi and continued the aims of TANU to establish itself at all levels of society and push Tanzania's socialist revolution to a higher degree.

Much has been written about Tanzania since 1967. Political scientists, economists, educationalists and social scientists have been very busy evaluating Tanzania's socialism in categories or as a whole. Generally they can be put into two groups, the pessimists and the optimists.³⁷ The pessimists view the Tanzanian direction towards socialism as a failure in both its conceptual and strategic areas. They argue that Nyerere's type of socialism is the wrong type with a weak ideological conception. They focus their attention at the class that is in dominant position in the state, arguing that 'the state is in transition to socialism only if that class is the proletariat and if that proletariat has come to see that its interests and the interests of the whole society require a continuing pursuit of the class struggle'.³⁸ They argue that the state in Tanzania is dominated by the 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' and The Arusha Declaration and subsequent policies are seen in 'the context of practical politics, as the work of politicians trying to stay in power as they harness social forces for their goals'.³⁹ They point out facts which show that contradictions between leaders and the masses have sharpened because of the bureaucratic, elitist, coercive and undemocratic nature

of the new ruling class, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. They point out further that The Arusha Declaration politically progressive though it was, brought power and property to the ruling class, Education for Self-Reliance brought frustration and policies on Rural Development brought chaos and stagnation. Issa Shivji sums up on what he sees lacking in Tanzania's socialism:

A planned political strategy aimed at transforming the whole foundation of the society ... would involve political (class) struggle guided by the correct ideology and implemented by a party of politically committed, ideologically sound and trained ... cadres. None of these pre-conditions is satisfied.⁴⁰

The second group, the optimists, agree that Tanzania has had many problems since 1967 but they see these problems as drawbacks rather than a failure in the whole system. They focus on the policies of the state rather than the class nature of the state and argue that 'the state would have a society in transition to socialism if that society were deliberately reshaping itself along more egalitarian and participatory lines'. They point to the various achievements since Arusha in the areas of education, health, standard of living and to the initiatives taken by the party and the state towards more equality, democracy and participation.⁴¹

These evaluations point to the fact that the Ujamaa process in Tanzania has met with and created problems while achieving some relative successes. But in recognition of the predominance of social contradictions and economic stagnation, there has been a change in certain policies and directives. From late 1977, there has been a

relaxation, on the part of the government, on some previously considered 'capitalistic activities' - activities which the Arusha Declaration was to discourage. Informal encouragement towards private investment in industry and agriculture was officially endorsed during the Parliamentary Budget session of 1981/82 and again in 1984/85. Foreign exchange controls have been relaxed, private capital has been enthusiastically encouraged to invest especially in agricultural activities.⁴² Whereas it can be argued that these new directions contradict some of the fundamental elements in the Arusha Declaration, they can also be seen as emergency measures to tackle immediate economic problems. In the light of food and commodity shortages aggravated by the growing embarrassment of an independent nation begging from overseas donors year after year, the government has been forced to take steps to ensure economic recovery. There has also been, at the official level, a growing acceptance of the possibility and at times, the necessity of a mixed economy within an aspired socialist structure.⁴³ Tanzania's economic problems, however, cannot be blamed on socialism alone as a social structure. In retrospect, the present situation can be seen as almost inevitable in view of the type of planning and investment which have been carried out since 1967. Lack of scientific planning and utilization of resources available can be cited as an example. In spite of the officially claimed centralized planning, each sector of the economy has been operating almost autonomously. Industrial projects which would have lifted agriculture from its backward condition have either not been thought up or given

little priority. For a country that depends on agriculture for both subsistence and development, neglecting agriculture and the peasants is tantamount to suicide.⁴⁴

The political and economic statistical gains and losses, however, are not enough for a cultural evaluation of a people in the process of their development. The attitudes and values of the people which reflect, respond to and resist social practice are just as important. The success or failure on the part of the people to understand, internalize and assimilate a dominant ideology or maintain and formulate residual and emergent values and attitudes speak for contradictions at all levels of the social process - economic, political, ideological, aesthetic, etc.

One of the major complaints from in and out of government circles is that Tanzanians have not changed their values and attitudes since the Arusha Declaration. Reviewing the 10 years after Arusha, Nyerere himself pointed out that Tanzania has not yet achieved socialism nor self reliance. 'The method of exploitation has changed but exploitation persists'.⁴⁵ But the most critical review was given by the Party Central Committee when it met in Dar-es-Salaam at the end of 1981:

In spite of the efforts to provide education and create public organizations, our society still has attitudes, characteristics and values which are contrary to the basic values of the policy of Ujamaa which we intend to build.⁴⁶

The party's views which were later published, pointed out the increase in corruption, individuality, laziness, exploitation and capitalism. It put the emphasis on the slow process of cultural change to

inhibiting factors within government and party agencies, the general leadership and bad implementation of policies. Others, outside government and party leadership, have been quick to point out that values and attitudes will be hard to change in present Tanzania because those given the task to oversee these changes are themselves incapable of changing. Education is given as a good example, where teachers, being adults are incapable of socializing the young into socialist values because they still cling to the old values:

One could argue that unless a means is found to socialize the adult to comprehend the Ujamaa word in its reflection and then translate it into concrete action all over the country, Ujamaa will lose its ability to bring about the desired transformation in the culture.⁴⁷

To counter the rampant 'unsocialistic' behaviour within Tanzanian society, the government in 1983 passed the Economic Sabotage (Special Provisions) Act. The act was accompanied by the establishment of a special tribunal to prosecute acts committed against 'the economic safety or interest of the United Republic'.⁴⁸ Those considered offenders under the act ranged from hoarders of essential commodities, small and big racketeers as well as those involved in corruption. To stem laziness and mobilize people to work more, the government passed the Human Resources Deployment Act of 1983. The legislation aimed not only at regulating the 'deployment of available human resources' but also tried to strengthen the Arusha Declaration resolve that no man (except the infirm, the old and children) should live on the sweat of others.⁴⁹ Loiterers and those suspected of being unemployed were given a choice of either voluntarily returning to the rural areas or

being forcefully removed there. Besides the moralistic overtones in both these acts, there were economic pressures underlying their implementation. They, like the Structural Adjustment Programme of 1982⁵⁰, were part of a strategy which aimed at more economic production to arrest the downward economic trend - a trend which was the result of national problems as well as the result of the global economic situation which has affected most of the developing nations.⁵¹

What all these developments since the Arusha Declaration point to are two factors which have not always been complementary - the idealism of the Arusha Declaration inherent in its objectives and the practical reality which has at times resisted the attainment of the objectives. The Arusha Declaration and subsequent policies display a social philosophy which is man centred. Nyerere himself has said:

Human Development, is in fact the purpose of society itself ... nothing is more central to ... society than an acceptance that Man is its justification for existence.⁵²

This anthropocentric philosophy then sees man as the beginning and aim of human activity. Incorporated within this philosophy is a tendency for optimism which sees man as capable of changing his reality. At the same time this optimism minimizes or negates the negative dimensions of human existence. Idealism in this case always seems to have an upper hand to realism. The Arusha Declaration was full of idealism - an idealism which did not allow the anticipation of problems and obscured contradictions or conflicts in the process of implementation. The optimism in Arusha, for example, did not anticipate resistance during the period of cultural transformation. In 1967,

the task was envisioned as easy (it seems that way anyway), and one that could be accomplished with minimum preparation - an attitude which was to influence the policies and practices which followed. The already rooted class stratifications and interests did not receive the desired critical analysis. Implementation of the policy was not preceded by critical research and at times practical objectives. Villagization, for example, was initiated without prior investigation of the social and economic effects. As a result, there was resistance and disruption of social practices which affected both the peasants and the economy. Resistance brought in official coercion. What was missing was a sense of compromise which the leadership needed to persuade the people to accept and share in the beliefs of the ruling class. Thinkers like Gramsci have seen compromise as a necessary component in the development of hegemonic rule of one class over another. He has noted:

The fact of hegemony undoubtedly presupposes that the interests and tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised are taken into account, that there is a certain equilibrium of compromise, that, that is, the ruling group makes sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind, but it is also indubitable that such sacrifices and such compromises cannot affect what is essential.⁵³

The zeal and the uncompromising nature of certain official practices in Tanzania reduced the chances of establishing bonds between the ruled and the ruler other than in purely bureaucratic terms. The resistance which has cropped up against certain 'socialistic' practices, however, has not been necessarily a rejection of Ujamaa. Most often, it is a reaction against practices which are seen as opposing the interests of

those concerned. The peasants, for example, are usually conservative and suspicious of change until convinced of the benefits of change. The leadership at times, has not helped to dispel peasant suspicion and encourage resistance. In a village in Morogoro, peasants were exhorted by the government and party leadership to cultivate cotton - one of the commodities which generates substantial foreign exchange. The response was good and the peasants tried to meet the set targets. At harvest time, however, the peasants found themselves stuck with the cotton and could not sell it. The peasants were separated from their buyers by a bridge over a river which had broken down but could not be repaired in time to save the cotton. While investigating the problem, the peasants found out that, officially, money had been allocated to repair the bridge in time for the cotton harvest. The leadership, however, diverted the funds to the building of a party headquarters. After this, the peasants resisted growing cotton and concentrated on items profitable for them.⁵⁴

In spite of its aims for democracy and participation, the implementation of Arusha demonstrated a policy which worked from the top down, from the leaders to the masses. After Arusha, the party and government bureaucratic machineries expanded and entrenched themselves in all areas of social activities. When workers and peasants tried to experiment with democracy, these were interpreted as threats and the initiatives killed. What happened to workers' response to Mwongozo of 1971 is a case in point. Workers in various factories downed tools, locked out managers and took over the management of their

institutions in order to gain power and democratic control in their places of work. These were discouraged and silenced almost immediately.⁵⁵ The Decentralization policy of 1972 aimed at giving people effective control over their lives. Studies have shown, however, that in some places, at the grassroot level, the political climate was inhospitable to participation and effective democracy. This was aggravated by the confusion brought about by the duplication of bureaucratic structures at party and government levels.⁵⁶

Two more factors which are central to Arusha's ideals are the concepts of Self-Reliance and Ujamaa. The whole question of Self-Reliance has been problematic and at times partially misinterpreted. This is nowhere more evidenced than in the educational system. If education for self-reliance as stipulated in the Arusha Declaration means education which is geared to direct people towards self-sufficiency for themselves, then self-reliance as practised in schools is way off the mark. Schools have taken self-reliance as meaning engagement in activities which can make the institutions economically self-reliant. Very seldom are the concepts of critical thinking, applicability and relevance incorporated in the implementation of Education for Self-Reliance. While self-help schemes for economic production are part of the policy, these, however, tend to overshadow areas in education which affect thought processes, value judgments and cultural perspectives. Self-reliance is an important component of Tanzania's Ujamaa. Ujamaa was an economic and social concept rationalized through traditional organization of society.

There is little indication that the authors of Arusha had critically looked at traditional structures. Traditional life was presented as homogeneous and idyllic which it was not always. Exploitation, hierarchical social systems, sexual and age differentials were part of a system which on the surface looked harmonious and democratic. Traditionally, the focus for economic production was on the family and clan but with allowances for competition and individual acquisition of property regulated by commonly understood codes and principles. The Wasukuma, for example, have traditionally lived in scattered villages. Each family had its own pieces of land to cultivate and collective work among people of the same village was quite uncommon.⁵⁷ It is no wonder then that the policy for Villagization was found to stand in harsh contrast to this type of traditionalism. Traditional economic and political organization moreover, was supported and contained within them value systems, beliefs and cultural expression. This does not, however, deny the presence of 'humanistic' values in traditional society or the existence of elements in opposition to dominant ideologies and practice. It points to the fact that traditional society was a complex entity and the adoption of any of its elements demanded critical assessment.

In spite of the problems, conflicts and contradictions which have sprung up or been exacerbated by the implementation of the Arusha objectives, the Declaration has put a historical and cultural imprint on Tanzania. It inaugurated an era in which not only a better world could be dreamed about but also attempts made to make it a reality. That

Tanzania has been slow and at times failed to bring about the envisioned socialist transformation, this has not invalidated the original vision. More than anything, the political consciousness of Tanzanians has been raised so that the task to bring about the transformation is understood to be complex and a long struggle. The point reached has been the result of a process of political awakening. It is this process which underlies the history of contemporary theatre in Tanzania as well as the ideological and theoretical factors informing theatre practice.

2. Theatre response and the Arusha Declaration: ideological and theoretical considerations

The complexity of cultural transformation is shown not only in the uneven development of its structural elements but also in the cultural expression which results from this development. The Arusha Declaration had a great impact on theatre. The developments, problems and contradictions in the general culture provided immediate thematic content for the theatre. Moreover, the focus given to economic and political areas was echoed in the focus and attention given art in general and theatre specifically. As Hussein has pointed out:

It was in this light and because of these political, economic and cultural events, that drama, theatre and their very structure took a turn in Tanzania.⁵⁸

Even though theatre and the other arts were not specifically mentioned in the Arusha Declaration, it soon became quite apparent what theatre's role and task were expected to be during a transition to

socialism. In 1968, during a meeting with Tanzanian poets, President Nyerere directed:

Go and propagate the Arusha Declaration and praise our national culture.⁵⁹

Theatre in socialist Tanzania became the focus of discussion inside and outside official circles. Academicians, theoreticians, as well as theatre practitioners, echoed Mwalimu's call. This was a call to put poetry, theatre and the other arts at the service of the tasks set forth by the Arusha Declaration. The need to harness cultural expression in the period after the Arusha Declaration was found to be so important that the ruling party TANU appointed a special committee in 1970 to forward its recommendations to the Central Committee in view of what culture is and its function within national perspectives. Later the following year, the 15th General Conference of the party endorsed amongst other functions of culture: to ensure that values are in line with Tanzania's socialism; to educate and conscientize the masses; to propagate party ideology; to preserve what is valuable in traditional culture. Great emphasis was put on the need to revive and develop traditional arts in the development of a national cultural identity.⁶⁰ Besides making a general call to all artists, the party and government planned and tried to develop its own organs to participate in this cultural development. As early as 1968, discussions and plans were underway to build an Institute of National Culture. Amongst its several objectives, the Institute was primarily to coordinate and encourage the development of national culture by

'coordinating, planning and executing research into the creative arts of Tanzania, notably written and oral literature, performing arts including theatre and dance; music; visual arts, including painting, sculpture and design; and all allied subjects'.⁶¹

Besides this institute, theatre courses which had begun at the University of Dar-es-Salaam in 1965 were formalized into a department by 1967. All these were to be guided by national political aspirations. The role of the theatre in institutions and by individuals was summarized by the Party newspaper when it said:

With the achievement of political independence in the majority of African countries, the problem of theatre appears in a new light. It must become a part of the struggle for economic and social development.⁶²

Two years later, the paper elaborated further on what it saw as the relevant function of theatre as vehicle and tool of cultural transformation:

It is clearly possible, therefore, to use the theatre as a tool in the transformation of ideas. It should be possible to use theatre to portray the things at stake in our revolution - the goals of the revolution and the way to those goals. There is a great potential for conveying ideas and motivating change through productions ... If cultural performances are to instruct as well as entertain, this is one of its tools which needs rehabilitation.⁶³

One of the most important official organs which was to translate the party's and government's objectives for theatre was the Ministry of National Culture, established in 1962. The rehabilitation of traditional culture and search for cultural identity which were the reasons behind the Ministry's establishment were made more immediate and a necessity by the Arusha Declaration. It has been pointed out by

A.G. White that what interests 'such governments as those of Tanzania ... is the use of theatre to draw the ordinary man into participation in or an understanding of the modern way of life ...'.⁶⁴ But it is not any modern way of life that governments of Tanzania were interested in. Structures like the Ministry of Culture were seen as organs to oversee and develop a particular way of life which was in line with the aspirations of Ujamaa as stipulated in the Arusha Declaration.

Such activities as theatre in the state organs, however, show not only the official efforts at cultural engineering but also the gaps between objectives and practice, policy and its implementation as well as ideology and social reality. Taken together, these elements contribute to the nature of theatre response within official organs after the Arusha Declaration. The official response, however, has always been complemented by those who have practised theatre and their response has been quite evident in the devised and written plays of the period.

Theatre writing and production in Tanzania since 1967 display activities which can be divided into two groups: those activities which show a response to specific political issues prevalent at the time and those which are general in nature but contribute to the aspired ideal society. While the second group contains theatre activities whose content is not 'political', the social and aesthetic aims of these activities are, nevertheless, not antagonistic to those aimed at by activities in the first group. The period after Arusha, however, has

been dominated by activities found in the first group where content and/or objectives are directly political. The political nature of the written, devised or improvised plays, for example, manifests itself through two complementary factors: a) the portrayal of political and social issues within prescribed political structures. This is done by using a consciously chosen ideological perspective. b) the conscious use of theatre as a political forum by the writers and practitioners. As such, the plays show an alignment to the struggle to effect social change as envisioned by the Arusha Declaration as well as reflect the reality resulting from the struggles. Events drawn from past and recent experiences highlight general and specific struggles which support ideological objectives. The plays also show, however, that the nature of alignment and support for ideological objectives has not been uniform throughout the period, 1967 to 1984. The period displays two different types of political and aesthetic commitments which inform some of the plays produced between 1967 and mid 1970s and those produced after 1976. While there are plays concerned with similar issues or using the same theatre approaches in both periods, the latter period contains plays which show a redefinition of the political commitment of theatre. There is a discernible gradual radicalization of output from a theatre which translates its political commitment into supportive, integrationist propaganda for the official and aspired dominant nationalistic culture to a commitment to challenge and oppose the ruling hegemonic values and practices which retard or negate socialist objectives. The later part of the 70s and the early 80s produced

plays which show a break in the alliance between politicians and some theatre practitioners. This break is not so much the manifestation of a total opposition to the dominant ideological hegemony but an attempt to expose contradictions in values and practices in the exercising of this hegemony. The resistance displayed in some of the plays is a resistance towards some practices in the exercise of hegemony and an exposition of why and how the practices contradict the ideological objectives of the Arusha process.

The advocated changes are only revolutionary in the sense that new revolutions are put forward as the only solutions to bring about a more desirable socialist organization of society. The developments in the content of plays after the mid 70s were accompanied by changes of styles and forms in theatre practice. New elements of emphasis in theatre performance developed in such areas as participation, traditional forms, fantasy, performance space and theatrical vigour. In some cases these changes have been quite radical. This radicalization, however, has not been confined to theatre alone. It has simultaneously taken place in such literary outputs as poetry, short stories and novels. It is a development which the Tanzanian writer and critic, F.E.M.K. Senkoro has tried to analyze and has called the development a process of 'negation'.

While agreeing with his observation that creative output which came out in the late 70s and early 80s negated that which had preceded it, one questions his analysis on the source of that negation. Senkoro argues that the later poets, novelists and dramatists were reacting to

the creative output of their predecessors which was 'bankrupt', 'parochial', and 'narrow minded parroting'.⁶⁶ This argument is fallacious. The sense of negation did not arise from creative competition amongst the individual writers. Rather, it was a different perception of reality which has become complex plus the failure of economic and ideological structures to attain the wished for transformation within the general culture which brought about these developments. The negation then is of a reality created by social and political elements which have retarded the envisioned cultural change. This explains why, for example, the same writers and composers who were earlier 'parrots' became critics, radicals and callers for a new revolution. Earlier on, there was close alignment between politicians and poets and dramatists. There was a shared vision for what the country needed and their means of achievement. This phenomenon is not peculiar to Tanzania but as J. Fieback has pointed out, a common characteristic in socialist oriented countries:

As regards the socialist orientated states there are some fundamental common interests between the leadership and the vast masses of the peasantry and the emerging working class. A socialist orientated theatre would necessarily function in support of this general policy ...⁶⁷

For Tanzania, the policy was Ujamaa with all the values and elements of a socialist vision. This vision was seen by some supporters of the Arusha Declaration as needing endorsement and support. Also, the process through which the vision could become a reality was seen as synonymous to the function of art itself; and theatre is art:

Art is an indispensable means for the merging of the individual with the whole. It reflects man's infinite capacity for association, or sharing experience and ideas, and it does so even when its content actually tries to deny the capacity for sharing. This function of art is kin to the motivations and the aims of the Arusha Declaration, to the very tenets of a nation building in Tanzania, the building of a cooperative, communal society in which the individual is merged with the whole, and in which self-reliance does not mean individualism. ⁶⁸

Such statements by those practising theatre in Tanzania right after the Arusha Declaration give insight and a perspective of the underlying motivations and ideas for theatre produced then in and out of academic circles.

Theatre, like the other arts, was directed towards the attainment of the socialist vision. What the politicians preached was seen as what the people wanted. The following statement exemplifies a common attitude of theatre practitioners at the time:

The future of Tanzanian theatre is very bright because the theatre finds inspiration and direction from well-thought out and clearly directed policies of the country. The ship of state has a clearly mapped out course, and the chances of it floundering are slim, and so the artists also are bound to have a clear vision of the role they must play in the society. ⁶⁹

What the artists aimed at then can be summarized in Mulokozi's words:

Any writer who is really concerned about their (people's) welfare should give them hope and encouragement not discouragement. He should also give prescriptions whenever possible. ⁷⁰

In theatre, as elsewhere, this translated itself into a truthful, historical concrete portrayal of reality, a celebration of events and persons who side with the aspirations of peasants and workers and a provision of visions for a desired social organization. This was a

period of enthusiasm for the Arusha Declaration and what it stood for. By the late 70s, a parting of the ways between artists and politicians was taking place. The earlier trust waned and 'contestation' replaced 'fidelity'. Events earlier hailed as political and social achievements became clearly inaugurations for new struggles. Protests ensued as ideological and political structures of the ruling class were perceived to be responsible for perpetuation of new and old oppressive and exploitative elements. Contradictions between ideological expectations and practice became major factors in the failure to improve the lot of peasants and workers. Theatre practitioners realized that what the leadership preached was not necessarily what it practised. Sometimes what it wanted was not always to the people's benefit. National self-appraisal, protest and prescriptions for further revolutionary changes became more visible. These developments, however, did not negate the original social vision but only those elements that hindered its attainment. Theatre output shows that for the most part, socialism is seen as the answer for viable development and organization of society. In this, the writers and practitioners seem to have worked within Sartre's idea of commitment and freedom:

He [writer] is someone who is faithful to a political and social body but never stops contesting it. Of course, a contradiction may arise between his fidelity and his contestation, but that is a fruitful contradiction. If there is fidelity without contestation, that's no good.⁷¹

The commitment to socialist ideals continues in the latter period after Arusha. No play, for example, prescribes opting out of socialism.

On the contrary, more often than not there is more revolutionary socialism which is suggested.

In spite of the differences of emphasis and the attitudes towards the reality which informs it; thematically, the theatre has concerned itself with three major areas: a) a concern with struggles against colonialism, slavery, oppression and exploitation; b) a concern for a search for identity, ethnicity and nationalism; c) a concern to institutionalize socialist values and practice. Sometimes these concerns overlap and support each other within single works. Sources of material are drawn from both historical and contemporary issues and practice but always with the aim of acting upon the present, an aim not always attained. All these concerns and struggles were given focus by the Arusha Declaration and theatre practitioners turned to supporting, interpreting, protesting and exposing elements for and against them. The response towards the Arusha Declaration and the social reality which followed has been summarized in a poem, 'Picking up Rice' by E.

Kezilahabi:

News came from Arusha
 We began sorting out the rice of Ujamaa
 With eyes ahead, eyes sideways, we removed sand
 We made a small burial place for the sand

We began to remove broken rice one by one
 The fingers worked like a sewing machine
 Night and day until the eyes hurt
 We made a small white pile

There was too much broken rice and sand
 We cooked after labouring a long time
 We began to eat
 We found out there was still sand and broken rice

When shall we eat without sand, without broken rice?⁷²

(my translation)

The theatre reflects the struggles to try and remove the social and political sand through the Arusha Declaration itself and to demystify the social practice existing because or in spite of the Declaration. The thematic concerns in theatre have been summed up by one of the most active theatre writers in Tanzania, Penina Muhando:

I think when I do my writing I want to pick any problem which is troubling the people in Tanzania at the present time. Because I see myself as having a duty to try to help the society either in showing where the problems are or trying to suggest solutions to problems or at least to make the people aware that the sources of this and that problem are in this and that thing ...⁷³

It is a belief shared by many theatre practitioners in Tanzania as the output of the work in the period under study shows.

Developments can also be seen in the style and forms of theatre expression. The plays devised and written in the early years after the Arusha Declaration up to the mid 70s show a great reaction against the function of theatre as entertainment. Pedagogy and didacticism, therefore, became paramount. Issues were presented in unambiguous ways so that they led to clear identification of positive and negative factors. Rhetoric and word gained primacy in theatre and overshadowed other elements of performance. Sensuousness of the theatre event was not the primary concern of most of the plays or performances, but the political or social message. While some plays produced after the mid seventies display these characteristics, others show a move away from rejecting the entertainment function of theatre. What to say in

theatre appears to be as important as how to say it. Many more writers and practitioners joined such earlier writers as E.N. Hussein and P.O. Mlama in the experimentation of vehicles for theatre expression. Senkoro is partly right when he observes that from the late 70s stylistic changes occurred in literature and drama because 'there was need to have a more lively form to make the social and political messages in the works of literature more interesting'.⁷⁴ While this conscious attention of the practitioners cannot be overlooked, the changes in stylistics can be attributed to two important factors which Senkoro overlooks. The first one was a search for ways to express a reality which was seen by the mid 70s to be complex and imbued with contradictions. The former ways of expression became less and less adequate. A more important reason was the turn towards traditional performances and oration as integral parts of contemporary expression. All these have made recent theatre output appear more complex than previously. In some cases, riddling, dance, story-telling, recitations, mime and music replaced rhetoric. Fantasy and symbolism became potent theatre elements. Ambiguity was no longer shunned. While not losing its seriousness to political commitment, the theatre lost its sombre and pedantic approach and effect. This theatre has been seen by some as an effective political forum which exploits the entertainment value of theatre expression. After witnessing such theatre, Nicholas Owen reported:

In theatrical terms the results are electric. Powerful and dramatic images communicate their purpose simply and effectively through a skillful combination of traditional

forms with gesture and the spoken word. Improvisation and other theatre techniques draw together the cultural threads of Tanzanian society and bind them into a new form of dramatic expression.⁷⁵

Owen saw the new dramatic expression as flexible being 'equally successful in presenting a straightforward political story, an educational or didactic piece, or an exposition of social mores'.⁷⁶

He saw in the performances a rejection of the old colonial theatre production. The rejection, however, has not been total but selective. The tendency has been to incorporate alien forms which contribute in a relevant way to expressing Tanzania's reality. Conventional drama has continued to play a major role in Tanzanian theatre.

Theatre as communication is effected by individuals who are not only part of the reality they portray but have different skills and available supportive social elements which inform their work. The strength and weaknesses of any theatre work therefore depends not only on its failure or success to meet its own objectives but also in the degree to which the aesthetic component of theatre is achieved.

Theatre output after the Arusha Declaration displays a diversity of skills which have been at times a major factor in achieving both the political and aesthetic goals.

Theatre practice in Tanzania has been informed by another general attitude shared amongst its practitioners. It is a moral and social attitude which seeks for stability and harmony:

... theatre has a more important function than mere entertainment, it is an educational and correctional medium to chastise and correct society, a tool to ensure social harmony, the harmony that we find in traditional societies.⁷⁵

This search for harmony can be seen in the various struggles, political and social, depicted in the plays as well as topics of a general nature which somehow affect harmonious living. Ujamaa, total political and economic liberation are the contemporary models sought. The search to establish harmony can also be seen in plays which deal with everyday relationships in marriage, the upbringing of children, and individual idiosyncratic behaviour. In all of them the aim is to eliminate destabilising elements and attain harmony of one kind or another.

The plays reviewed in this study come from published and unpublished sources. Most of the plays in book form were published after 1967. Many more plays, however, have been written or performed but have not been put into print. Included, therefore, are plays whose performances have been observed. Sometimes these have been supplemented by scripts provided by the producers or which were available in library archives. Not all published plays have seen a performance. This is due to the fact that, as in the rest of East Africa, prior performance has not been a criteria for publication. Moreover, in Tanzania, those who have written plays, have come from all walks of life - teachers, lawyers, academicians, administrators, workers and students as well as theatre practitioners. The importance of performance which can inform a play has not been a primary concern to most of these but publication has. Who is published and why, however, is determined by factors outside the qualitative elements of the plays. These factors also determine the quantity of plays available in print. One of the most important factors is the publishing industry itself. Within East

Africa, there are about 54 publishing agencies open to writers in the region including Tanzania.⁷⁸ Out of these, only 10 have concerned themselves with publishing plays and less than that have actually published Tanzanian plays available. Such companies as Oxford University Press, Heinemann, Longman Tanzania Ltd., Foundation Books, East African Publishing House, East African Literature Bureau have been quite selective in publishing Tanzanian plays. The plays which have been mostly written in Kiswahili have been seen to have a limited market. Only a few established authors such as E.N. Hussein and P.O. Mlama have managed to have their works published by these agencies, most of which are part of multinational corporations. Most of the plays published especially after 1975 have come out of national agencies. The Dar-es-Salaam University Press began publishing plays in 1981.

The new efforts by the Tanzania Publishing House and the Dar-es-Salaam University Press have definitely increased the availability of published plays. In the meantime, however, writers have lost other outlets for publication. Periodicals and magazines such as Darlite, Umma, Zinduko and Kioo cha Lugha published some plays in the late 60s and early 70s. By the mid seventies, most of these publications had ceased to exist or were appearing quite irregularly. The regional hostilities amongst the East African countries during the 70s made it difficult to use publishing agencies outside national boundaries. The break up of the East African Community which culminated in the closing of the border between Tanzania and Kenya in 1977 meant publishing facilities in Kenya were closed to Tanzanian

writers. It meant also that Tanzanian books already published in Kenya could not be available in Tanzania. The writers have therefore been forced to rely on the national publishing houses. The most active and the one which remains the most available publishing agent for playwrights in the country is the Tanzania Publishing House. Even here, however, publication of a play is governed by economic and ideological considerations. Walter Bgoya, the General Manager of the Tanzania Publishing House has put forward three reasons why a script including a play script may be rejected for publication:

He [the publisher] can decide because the book will not sell; he can decide because he does not like the ideological position of the writer; and he can decide because he thinks the book lacks substance...⁷⁹

A play can then be published if it has on one hand a political and social relevance and on the other, if it has a market. Relevance is measured within the dominant ideological objectives while the market means the demand in schools. The demand for plays in schools, however, is limited. There is no demand in primary schools (the largest market) where the curriculum is closed to them. They are only needed in some secondary schools, a few colleges and the University. Moreover, the Tanzania Publishing House has limited resources which force it to establish priorities in publishing and this has not always favoured plays. All these factors have contributed to the quantity and quality of published plays in the country. Many plays remain unpublished because of these factors. But being unpublished has not been, for the most part, a drawback to the plays affected or their

producers. Performance rather than publication has claimed a primary position. Organized groups, individuals and educational institutions have been active producing plays which aim at the stage first and publication is incidental. Pre-publication stage readings or performances of plays by established writers has become common especially since the latter part of the 70s. These writers have tried to reverse the trend, common elsewhere in Africa where creative works have been market goods first and social practice second.

The published plays in Tanzania, therefore, don't tell the whole story of theatre performance in Tanzania. The direction that theatre has taken since 1967 can be found in the improvised plays of cultural troupes and institutions, in the radio theatre, in the popular performances of theatre for development, the many Ngonjera as well as the published plays. Amongst the contemporary Tanzanian theatre practitioners who have developed their craft in the period after the Arusha Declaration is Ebrahim Hussein. Chapter 3 looks into Hussein's work and his contribution to the theatre experience of the period.

Notes to Chapter 2

- 1 The pronouncements of these policies can all be found in J.K. Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism, Dar-es-Salaam, 1969, pp.229-250; 267-290; and 337-366.
- 2 'Ujamaa' means kinship, familyhood, unity made up of relations and Nyerere has explained it thus:

The word 'Ujamaa' denotes the kind of life lived by a man and his family - father, mother, children and near relatives. Our Africa was a poor country before it was invaded or ruled by foreigners. There were no rich people in Africa. There was no person or group of persons who had exclusive claim to the ownership of the land. Land was the property of all the people, and those who used it did not do so because it was their property. They used it because they needed it, and it was their responsibility to use it carefully and hand it over in good condition for use by the future generations. Life was easy ... No one used wealth for the purpose of dominating others. This is how we want to live as a nation. We want the whole nation to live as one family ... This is the basis of socialism.

See J.K. Nyerere, 'Leaders Must not be Masters' in Freedom and Socialism, p.137.

- 3 J.K. Nyerere, 1969, p.5.
- 4 Julius K. Nyerere, Ujamaa ni Imani, East African Publishing House, Dar-es-Salaam, 1976, p.11 (my translation).
- 5 Julius K. Nyerere, 1969, p.234.
- 6 Ibid., pp.233-234.
- 7 See Julius K. Nyerere, 1976, pp.26-30.

- 8 Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 'Education for National Culture', in Forward, Vol.4, nos. 2 & 3, 1982, p.2.
- 9 J.K. Nyerere, 1969, p.290.
- 10 Ibid., p.346.
- 11 Ibid., p.365.
- 12 J.K. Nyerere, "'Ujamaa" - The Basis for African Socialism', in Freedom and Unity, Oxford University Press, London, 1966, p.170.
- 13 J.K. Nyerere, 1969, p.15.
- 14 J.K. Nyerere, 1966, p.186.
- 15 See Lionel Cliffe and John Saul, Socialism in Tanzania, East African Publishing House, Vol.1, Nairobi, 1972; also Cranford Pratt, The Critical Phase in Tanzania, 1945-1968, University Press, Cambridge, 1976.
- 16 Henry Bienen, Tanzania, Party Transformation and Economic Development, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970, p.461.
- 17 David R. Morrison, Education and Politics in Africa, The Tanzanian Case, C. Hurst & Company, London, 1976, p.19.
- 18 Henry Bienen, 1970, pp.158-202; David Morrison, 1976, pp.18-37, and Cranford Pratt, 1976, pp.90-171 and 127-152.
- 19 J.K. Nyerere, 'Democracy and the Party System', in Freedom and Unity, p.200.
- 20 See Tanganyika, The Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, 1964-69, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development Planning, Dar-es-Salaam, 1964.
- 21 J.K. Nyerere, 1966, p.162.
- 22 See Nyerere's speech to the special meeting of the National Assembly of Tanganyika on 25 April, 1964, in Freedom and Unity, pp.291-294.
- 23 For a detailed discussion on the union between Tanganyika mainland and Zanzibar see Cranford Pratt, 1976.

- 24 J.K. Nyerere, 1966, pp.323-325 and 332-333.
- 25 What has happened in China after the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution with its purges and counter purges has proven Nyerere partly right. On China's Cultural Revolution see Gargi Dutt & U.P. Dutt, China's Cultural Revolution, Asia Publishing House, London, 1970; also Mao Tsetung, Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung, Foreign Language Press, Peking, 1971.
- 26 See J.K. Nyerere, 1969, pp.19-22.
- 27 These events were widely reported in both the government paper, The Standard, and the party's The Nationalist especially between February and October 1967.
- 28 These were the National Development Corporation and the State Trading Corporation. For more details on this see Bismark Mwansasu and Cranford Pratt, Towards Socialism in Tanzania, Tanzania Publishing House, Dar-es-Salaam, 1979, p.13.
- 29 See David Morrison, 1976, p.28.
- 30 The Daily News, July 14, 1972. See also S.N. Eliufoo, 'Education: A new Era', in Knud Erik Swendsen, Self Reliant Tanzania, Tanzania Publishing House, Dar-es-Salaam, 1969, pp.240-245.
- 31 This was announced through the Musoma Resolution which also opened university entrance to mature students. See The Annual Plan 1975-76, Printpak, Dar-es-Salaam, pp. 30-31.
- 32 See Annual Plan 1976-77 and 1977-78, Dar-es-Salaam, Printpak.
- 33 See TANU Guidelines 1971, Dar-es-Salaam, TANU, 1971.
- 34 The Second Five Year Development Plan 1969/74, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development Planning, Dar-es-Salaam, 1969.
- 35 For detailed accounts of socialism and rural development see Jonathan Barker, 'The debate on Rural Socialism in Tanzania'; Jannik Boesen, 'Tanzania: From Ujamaa to Villagization', and Adolpho Mascarenhas, 'After Villagization - What', in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, pp.95-165.

Also see Cliffe, 'Ujamaa Vijijini and Class Struggle in Tanzania' in Cliffe and Saul (eds.), Socialism in Tanzania, Vol.1, 1972.

- 36 See Bismark U. Mwansasu, 'The Changing Role of the Tanganyika African National Union' in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, pp.169-191, also Mwongoza wa CCM, 1981, Kiuta, Dar-es-Salaam, 1981.
- 37 Pratt calls them the 'Marxists socialists' and the 'Democratic socialists'. See his paper, 'Tanzania's transition to socialism: reflections of a democratic socialist' in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, pp.193-232.
- 38 See Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, Tanzania Publishing House, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975. And on criticism on Shivji see Mwansasu and Pratt in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, pp.5-6 and 194-205; see also Utafiti, Vol.III, No.1, 1978, Dar-es-Salaam.
- 39 Henry Bienen, op.cit., p.408.
- 40 Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, p.109.
- 41 Mwansasu and Pratt take this line of argument in their papers in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979.
- 42 See Budget Speeches for 1981/82, 1982/83, 1983/84 and especially 1984/85, Government Printers, Dar-es-Salaam, 1984.
- 43 Abdurahaman Babu in his address to the University of Dar-es-Salaam on 25/7/1984 put this point quite emphatically. See the Daily News, July 26, 1984.
- 44 In a preamble to the Agricultural Policy of 1983, the government stated:

Something approaching 90% of the population is directly or indirectly engaged in agricultural activities, while 50% of the Gross Domestic Product and more than 75% of the foreign exchange earnings accrue from the agricultural sector ... even in recent drought years about 90% of the food consumed has been produced within the country.

Investment in agriculture since the Arusha

Declaration has been estimated at between 8% and 15% of annual government spending. See, The Agricultural Policy of Tanzania, Government Printers, 1983.

- 45 See Julius K. Nyerere, Azimio la Arusha - Baada ya Miaka Kumi, KIUTA, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977, pp.1-2.
- 46 Mwongozo wa CCM, KIUTA, 1981, pp.80-91.
- 47 W.M.S. Chamungwana, 'Strategy for Cultural Transformation', in TAAMULI, Vol.5, no.1, Dar-es-Salaam, June 1975.
- 48 See 'Economic Sabotage (Special Provisions) Act', Government Printers, May 1983.
- 49 See 'The Human Resources Deployment Act, 1983'; Acts Supplement, Government Printers, May 1983, pp.95-107.
- 50 Implementation of the programme has been spelt out in 'Implementation for the Structural Adjustment Programme, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982.
- 51 The way the global economic situation has affected Third World Countries like Tanzania has been discussed by, amongst others, J.K. Nyerere, AZIMIO la Arusha - Baada ya Miaka Kumi, 1977.
- 52 J.K. Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism, p.4.
- 53 Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prisons Notebooks, Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowel Smith, trans., Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971, p.161.
- 54 This incident was told by P.O. Mlama and features in her play, Lina Ubani discussed later in this study.
- 55 See Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, pp.123-145.
- 56 See for example the study by Herme J. Mosha, 'TANU at Grassroot level' in The Party: Essays on TANU, Tanzania Publishing House, Dar-es-Salaam, pp.19-31.
- 57 This information is from the peasants of Kwimba District, Mwanza Region, February 1984.
- 58 E.N. Hussein, 'On the Development of Theatre in East Africa', Ph.D. thesis, Humbolt University, 1975, p.76.

- 59 Nyerere was speaking to Poets on 6th June 1968 and the statement has been quoted many times including in Mnyampala's Ngonjera za Ukuta, Dar-es-Salaam, 1971, back cover page, also Swahili, Vol.41/2, Dar-es-Salaam, Sept., 1971, p.68.
- 60 Resolution 13 in Maazimio ya Mkutano Mkuu wa 15 wa TANU, 1971.
- 61 This was contained in a Draft Constitution for the establishment of the Institute of National Culture, Dar-es-Salaam, 1970, and was made available by the Department of Art, Music and Theatre of the University of Dar-es-Salaam (unpublished).
- 62 The Nationalist, June 6, 1969.
- 63 The Nationalist, September 11, 1971.
- 64 A.G. White, The Drama of Africa, New York, 1974, p.70.
- 65 F.E.M.K. Senkoro, 'You are so nice, where can I Get a Gun to Blast Your Damn Head', Tanzanian Literature After 1967; a paper delivered at North-Western University, Evanston, Illinois, March, 1985.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 J. Fieback, 'On the Social Function of Modern African Theatre and Brecht', DarLite, Vol.IV, No.2, Dar-es-Salaam, March, 1970, p.13.
- 68 Herbert Shore, 'Art in a Developing Nation', Ghala, July 1969, p.51.
- 69 Bob Leshoi, 'Tanzania Socialist Theatre', New Theatre Magazine, Third World Theatre, Vol. XII, No.2, 1972, p.23.
- 70 M. Mulokozi in a review of E. Kezilahabi's Kichomi, in Kiswahili, Toleo 45/2, September 1975, p.105.
- 71 Jean Paul Sartre as quoted in Nadine Gordimer, 'A Writer's Freedom', English in Africa, Vol.4, no.1, March 1977, p.47.
- 72 E. Kezilahabi, 'Kuchambua Mchele' in his Kichomi, London, 1974, p.63.
- 73 Penina Mlama in Conversation with African Writers, Voice of America, Washington, 1981, p.140.
- 74 F.E.M.K, Senkoro, op.cit.

- 75 Nicholas Owen, 'When Educational theatre is exciting', Africa Now, April, 1982, p.78.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Penina Muhando as quoted by Jesse Mollel in his 'The Drama of Penina Muhando', M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1979, p.58.
- 78 On problems about publishing in East Africa see M. Mulokoni in Uandishi na Uchapishaji: Makala za Semina ya Kimataifa ya Waandishi wa Kiswahili, 11; Dar-es-Salaam, 1983, pp.128-138.
- 79 Walter Bgoya, 'Uhuru wa Mwandishi' in Zinduko, Dar-es-Salaam, 16/8/1974, p.20.

CHAPTER 3

THE THEATRE OF EBRAHIM N. HUSSEIN1. The Writer

E.N. Hussein is probably the leading playwright in East Africa today, but except for Kinjeketile, his works are practically unknown outside Tanzania. Two reasons emerge as to the causes of this obscurity. Hussein writes in Kiswahili and as such only those who speak or read that language have access to his work. Kinjeketile is the only play to appear in English translation so far and two of his earlier plays have been translated in Japanese.¹ Critics, moreover, have concentrated on Kinjeketile for a couple of other reasons. It is the only obviously historical play and easy to understand. Even amongst Kiswahili speakers, several of Hussein's works are very complex in linguistic and sometimes theatrical structures.² Hussein is sometimes said to be artistically inaccessible and has often been compared to Wole Soyinka of Nigeria.³ Both are seen as poets who are too pre-occupied with their artistic creations for their own sake. The result is said to be a self-conscious art which speaks but to a few. Hussein has been conscious of such criticisms which have arisen from his strong

philosophical approach to his works and the language he uses. He does not defend himself but apologetically points out that writing in a simple straightforward manner is more difficult than the styles he uses. 'Maybe', he adds, 'it is time to get out of riddles and complexity and write simply'.⁴ Whether Hussein will be able to follow up on this intention remains to be seen. What the critics usually forget is that part of Hussein's complexity stems from what can be seen as a constant awareness of the theatre medium in which he is working. This is exemplified in his own statement that drama 'is not written but structured and organized and as such it is the stage and the conflicts which are the guiding principles'.⁵ His plays are good examples of these principles where the language and structure display a flair for consciously arranged theatre aesthetics and poetic idioms. Like Soyinka, Hussein gives his critics more work than they are willing to invest their energies for. The question is whether Mohammed should go to the mountain or the mountain to him.

Comparisons between Soyinka and Hussein can also be made in reference to their intended audience. Here their works display a difference in approach. Whereas Soyinka has been accused of catering to a non-Nigerian, non-African literate international audience, Hussein seems to focus on the literate population of Tanzania.⁶ Hussein's works have usually been produced by and for students and staff in secondary schools, institutions of higher learning and teacher training colleges. Most of his works are included in the literature courses in both English and Kiswahili. But the choice to write in Kiswahili makes

Hussein's intentions for an audience clear. Once the hurdles of discovering meanings and structures are overcome, the potential audience for these works is wider than is generally believed in both geographical and population terms.

Besides the choice of language Hussein and Soyinka show a fundamental difference in their source of inspiration for both the material and intention of their theatre work. Eldred Jones has pointed out that Soyinka's plays are concerned with the fate of man in his environment, the struggle for survival; 'the cost of survival; ... the role of death - even the necessity of death in a man's life'.⁷ He is pre-occupied with individual and collective social renovation. His kinship to Yoruba traditional aesthetics is underscored by the use of the same 'theatrical categories'.

On the one hand is the 'popular tradition' whose ultimate purpose is to impart physical and psychological therapy, the release and satiation of long, stifled emotions, through the mechanics of satire, comedy and masquerade; and on the other hand, is the 'ritual tradition' which reaches towards the same kind of restoration but on a far more profound, more solemn level, through the mechanics of rite and cultic symbolism.⁸

Osofisan goes on to categorize Soyinka's plays as those, on one hand 'which seek the exorcism of collective pain' on the purely sociological level utilizing resources of the popular stage; on the other hand are those plays which are 'metaphysical in content and mood' and assume ritualistic structures concluding on tragic tones.⁹

Unlike Soyinka, Hussein's pre-occupation is not with the discovery or link of contemporary man to the universal cosmological metaphysics

through which either exorcism or participation in the ritual process can take place. He is concerned with the relationship of man to the particular economic and political practices and how these constrain or aid man individually and collectively to attain liberation. There is no call for the past which might provide a purgation for today's evils. Only, the present responsibility to understand the social processes in a historical context and find answers in the possibilities of social and economic change. The metaphysical content he uses points away from itself and illumines the physical struggles of man to find an equitable society. The ritualistic structures present in some of his plays are devices which attempt at demystifying the process of social renovation. He seems to accept the fact that the cultural disruptions of the immediate past are a major component of contemporary reality in both the economic and social spheres.

The contradictions in economic and political practices are seen as processes to be understood now in relation to the cultural disruptions of the immediate past and their role in shaping the future. The plays come out immediate and political responding to the events which show either the necessity for cultural change or the contradictions within society in the process of its development. The plays are serious but never fatalistic. The failure in society is not the failure to achieve communal catharsis of the spirit but rather it is the failure to rearrange the social and economic structures to liberate man physically and spiritually.

Hussein draws from the traditional forms of the past but uses them

as ingredients in the recipe of his plays. There is a deliberate focus in his latest plays to explore more of the celebratory and narrative aspects of traditional performances as well as the relationship of these to its immediate audience. Even here one is always directed towards the future through the present. His use of history follows the same pattern where the past events are only important because of what they illuminate of the present - its aspirations, its contradictions and the social behaviour of its participants. Like most East African theatre writers, Hussein uses the stage and the performance metaphorically rather than metaphysically. His view of history and social development is a dialectical one - 'as a progression and people are constantly transcending the limitations of their societies by means of oppositions, which are resolved into new oppositions'.¹⁰ His characters are people who are caught up in this historical process and their salvation is social change which begins at the awakening of consciousness. To a greater extent, his works are closer to the South African contemporary drama and such West Africans as Aidoo, Osofisan and Omotoso.¹¹ All these have attempted to focus on contemporary issues and where myths, old tales or other traditional materials have been used, the concern has been to tell the tales and the myths anew, by recognizing the change in society and using them metaphorically in theme, character, and structural formations. Hussein, however, pays more attention to the forms and aesthetic values of theatre as an art form than the others.

Hussein was born and raised on the coast of Tanzania and most of his works carry the cultural values and attitudes of the Swahili. The

coastal Swahilis have evolved a culture which is a mixture of African elements, Arabic and Islamic features including some characteristics from other Asiatic and European cultures which interacted with the coastal peoples over several hundred years.¹² John Iliffe has described coastal culture the following way:

The coast was distinguished from inland societies by its religion and culture. The religion contained two elements. One was the vigorous monotheism of orthodox Islam, which taught that the proper response to misfortune was patient expectation of recompense in an after-life on which great emphasis was laid. Alongside this, however existed a popular cult centring on subordinate spirits, good or evil, Islam or purely African, who intervened in men's earthly lives, often causing misfortune, and populated a highly-coloured universe of miracles, angels and devils.¹³

The coastal culture, however, has been eclectic. Those from the hinterland easily adopted coastal ways while the coastal peoples internalized tribal ways so that by 1974, A.M. Khamisi could confidently say that the whole nation is in an era of 'Swahili culture'.¹⁴ There are, however, some distinct characteristics which remain as coastal elements and are part of the same sub-culture, e.g. a coastal Kiswahili dialect, forms of dress, some dance forms and music which reflect the coast's political and social history. Hussein uses the coastal Swahili for most of his plays but his interest is not in the cultural identity of these people but rather to use them as a microcosm of the Tanzanian society in a specific historical period struggling within the process of development and change. The political commitment which comes through most of the plays has enabled Hussein to a large extent to overcome the contradictions between the

conservatism of Islam (he is a Muslim himself), and the process of historical development for which he has focused his artistic creation.

He is aware though, that within him as within others in his society, there exist contradictory elements which inform individual lives. He sees in himself, for example, an individual caught between two cultural walls which sandwich him. In an early poem, he showed clearly the sense of inspiration and frustration caused by the demands of Islam and traditional culture on one hand and the feelings aroused because he has embraced a Western education and values on the other:

1. There, there goes the pulsating call of the drum
It boils my blood and sensuous desires
2. Blood cooled and spoilt by smooth violins
Violins which call me
Through sorrowful joy
3. Now I boil and pulsate
Now I rejoice and am refreshed
At the beat of life
The joy of freedom
Where shall I go?
4. I must pray
I must worship
Worship Allah.
But will He hear a voice which likes -
A voice coming from one who wears a 'Kanzu'* and the
Cross?¹⁵

(my translation)

- * Kanzu is a long gown-like garment popularly worn by Muslim men.

The dilemma is shared by many and has been dealt with in several plays. Hussein's own Wakati Ukuta is one of these and to some extent so is his Sokomoko. The religious part of Hussein, however, is a peripheral

element in his plays as he is more concerned with social practice and its problems rather than religious practices and metaphysical solutions. His main concern has been the Tanzanian society with its struggles and contradictions in the process of safeguarding total liberation. A review of his plays, however, shows that there has been an aesthetic and political development within the writer which has translated the struggles variously over the years. Even though his commitment to social problems appears in the early plays such as Alikiona and Wakati Ukuta (both written before 1969 but published after Kinjeketile) it is with Kinjeketile (1969) Mashetani (1971) and the later plays that an awareness of the complex social, political and economic processes emerges more strongly. He exposes the dilemmas, frustrations and conflicts of individuals and groups acted upon by these processes. More often than not, the writer shows his choice of alignment and sympathies with particular groups or individuals affected. The events after Arusha and values contained within the Declaration itself provide both the thematic material and a catalyst for his aesthetic response. While the plays show a move towards more questioning of the events, they at the same time move towards opting for traditional elements of performance. These seem to take place alongside another development in his works. There is a move from a corporal and emotional evocation to a more philosophical and intellectual contemplation within the plays. In this progression, the individual within the social conception gains prominence and is rendered more complex. Self reflection becomes an important feature as evidenced by the times that characters question

themselves or the length of time they spend with themselves. These features are quite absent in Alikiona and Wakati Ukuta but become progressively visible from Kinjeketile onwards. There is also a development in Hussein's works which move away from realistic portrayal of events to more dependence on non-realistic elements. Fantasy, symbols and images become more and more prominent in his later works.

In a rare interview with Abdilatif Abdalla in 1984, Hussein provided some clues as to how he approaches the content and forms of his play. He pointed out that his starting point for each play is not necessarily an issue or content but most often images which in the process of putting them together dictate the form and provide a fable. The different styles of his plays have been, therefore, not conscious efforts to try new ways of expression but have been dictated by the initial inspirations and images.¹⁶ These revelations by the writer explain the predominance of images, symbols, metaphors and certain dramatic structures of his plays used for each thematic content. They do not wholly explain why in spite of the differences in style and images which inspire each work, there has been consistency in the manner the structures and the images have produced the type of thematic content portrayed in the plays. This can be explained by how Hussein perceives his society, his commitment as an artist of the theatre and his skills at consciously translating both in his works. It is also partly due to the reality around him which acts as a catalyst to the images which inspire him.

Hussein started writing his plays when he was a student at the

University of Dar-es-Salaam in the late sixties and early seventies. This was the time when the socialist ideology of Tanzania as well as the question of self-reliance dominated the discussion and writings of both student and staff on campus.¹⁷ The question of liberation was contexted within colonialism - neocolonialism, capitalism and imperialism, exploitation and class alliances. The struggles within Tanzania were positioned alongside struggles in the rest of Africa and the world. The academic staff boasted a number of socialist and Marxist members who were active in ideological forums.¹⁸ There was no doubt here the laying of the foundation or an expansion of the political and economic social awareness for Hussein. In the arts, East European scholars joined the departments to provide alternatives from the American and West European traditions of thought and practice. Hussein later went to East Germany to pursue post-graduate studies. He was active as an actor during this time, a practice which he has unfortunately abandoned lately.

It is probably no accident that one notices a kind of Brechtian conception and presentation of the theatre forms in Hussein's work. It is not so much the parallel usage of certain theatre devices which links Hussein and Brecht but the overall effect even when totally separate devices have been used in which realism in the Brechtian sense is achieved. Brecht defined realism in the following sense which is also relevant to Hussein:

Realism means: discovering the causal complexes of society/
unmasking the prevailing view of things as the view of those
who are in power/writing from the stand point of the class

which offers the broadest solutions for the pressing difficulties in which human society is caught up/emphasizing the element of development/making possible the concrete, and making possible abstraction from it.¹⁹

Hussein rarely talks about his work nor has he presented a dramatic theory to be studied but his works show a writer who has definitely thrown his lot with the exploited, the oppressed, the disadvantaged. This is partly reflected in the choice of material and also through the utilization of his theatre skill to expose the mechanisms of social and political interaction.

Hussein has said that there is a basic principle or law in our times which the writer must recognize: 'the root of all evil is material production and how it is governed and especially the relations which result from the manner they are governed'. The writer, like the sociologist must master what he calls 'the science of history':

It means that for the writer who wants to speak the truth, before he can talk about evil and goodness, good and bad, before he can use his talent to create a novel, drama; before he can paint or write poetry, he must know the science of history.²⁰

Hussein has praised Ngugi because the principle 'law of the century' seems to reveal itself in specific terms in Ngugi's work:

For example when writers count the blessings brought by independence, that's when Ngugi counts the ribs exposed by hunger. And when poets praise the price and everlasting value of love, that's when Ngugi asks, 'how come it has become a commodity, a thing of ten minutes?'²¹

While paying tribute to Ngugi, Hussein reveals his own approach in handling issues within a historical context and ideological perspective. The issues and the questions may be different from

Ngugi's but the process is the same as evidenced in Hussein's plays.

2. The Plays

Hussein's Kiswahili version of Kinjeketile was published in 1969 and Wakati Ukuta and Alikiona in 1970. But the latter two plays, however, appear to have been written earlier when Hussein was a student at the Department of Theatre, University of Dar-es-Salaam. By studying these two plays, Hussein's theatrical and social development can be seen more clearly as he moves from play to play.

Wakati Ukuta tries to expose the problems of either embracing cultural change uncritically or resisting it. The central theme of Wakati Ukuta (Time is a Wall) can be summarized in the words of one of the characters in the play: 'Time is a wall, if you fight it you will hurt yourself'.²² The man is making a plea about time and change and the attitude of mind which is needed to accept the course of historical change and development. He observes in the same speech that just as he and his wife were different from their parents and predecessors because of political and social change, so will their children be different because of their education and the intrusion of alien cultures to which they are exposed. The play calls for flexibility in accepting and adjusting to change. The play can be characterized as a domestic drama exposing the conflicts between 'the old and the new', between the individual and the process of social change. Both the young and the old, Hussein seems to say, can lose out because the one resists the

historical process while the other embraces it too blindly. The result can be individual anguish and personal disillusionment. Tatu, a young woman, defies her parents by adopting what they call 'European ways' in her dress, her speech, her relations with men with whom she goes out to films and dancing. The parents are shocked more when she marries without their consent or traditional sanction. But Tatu soon finds out that her chosen road does not lead to fulfilment nor a realization of her dreams and has to return to her parents with great humiliation. The man she has married is both hollow and fickle.

Underlying the conflict between the old and the young is the conflict between the conservatism of the Muslim coast and the 'progressiveness' one finds in the inland peoples. Tatu's parents like a large number of coastal 'Waswahili' were much slower in embracing European ways than some hinterland peoples who were dubbed 'Wazungu Weusi' (black Europeans), by their quick adoption of European education and values. Swai, the man Tatu marries, is one of these. He is an urban man with a secondary school education. He embraces the urban Europeanized culture blindly. Tatu's father who has no education possesses great wisdom. He has great compassion for all those who want to fight time either by wanting it to come too fast or not to come at all. He knows that the behaviour of his daughter is part of the process of change but her mistake is in not understanding it and being impatient with it. He tells his wife:

It is only time. The time is not right. [He shows to be in deep thought] Tatu has read European books, she has seen a boy and girl going to a dance or the cinema. They

fall in love then they marry. It is not only Tatu but her whole generation. They also want to imitate those things. The time to do these things will come but not now. In trying to be the first to do this, she is fighting time. She wants it to come quickly and we are also fighting time by wanting it not to come. There's where our conflict lies.²³

Tatu comes to this realization at the end and tells Swai, 'We didn't know that even marriage has its time'. This awareness arms her and in spite of the cost she decides to return to her parents even if life will not be the same again. Asha, Tatu's mother and Swai, however, are oblivious to the demands of time and change. Asha can think only of her position in the community and the continuation of values she knows. Swai is on the other extreme and embraces the values of the alien culture greedily. Time for him means now and change means the freedom to pursue modern pleasures. The lack of consciousness in Swai and Asha is a drawback to themselves and those around them.

Hussein develops his plot in five tightly knit scenes designed to be played on a proscenium stage or a space that can be converted to such a stage. The first three scenes are set in Tatu's parents home with its meagre furnishings, including a couch which when seated upon 'makes one wary that it has been stuffed with stones'. This is a house full of social and economic worries represented by the changing morals and values, the taxes of different kinds and of the community where one's business is everybody's business. But this is a social world where the inhabitants receive moral support from each other in spite of the gossiping and rumourmongering.

Events move fast in the first scene where Tatu provokes her mother

by wanting to go to the movies with Swai. In anger the mother kicks both Tatu and Swai out. This act precipitates the events of the rest of the play. Scenes two and three provide the social and political framework of the characters as well as a time reference. There is the immediate community represented by the women in scene three who turn personal troubles into social events through their innuendos but also through their sympathy. In the international arena, the struggle for liberation continues in South Vietnam and Zimbabwe as the radio announces in scene two. Hussein will come back again and again in his later works to explore the nature and contradictions of liberation struggles which he mentions in passing in this early play. These struggles are still fresh in the readers' minds when news about Tatu's marriage is announced by a friend. The last two scenes take place in Swai and Tatu's room. There is no sense of community here and the inhabitants in it are as lonely and alienated as the occasional visitor who comes to give a hand or disrupt the lives of the occupants. When Tatu leaves and says that she will take nothing because she came with nothing, her meaning goes beyond a reference to material objects. The relationship was built on very little and nothing can be reaped from it since nothing was put into it except individual expectations and false dreams. Hussein like Ama Ata Aidoo in Dilemma of a Ghost trusts the old, the traditional, to give the moral and social support to enable one to go ahead with the struggles of living.²⁴ In the Dilemma of a Ghost, Ato's mother leads Eulalie into the old section of the house. Likewise in Wakati Ukuta Tatu goes back home where we have

been prepared to expect the parents will take her back. Tatu's return, however, is a compromise for both the young and the old who must accommodate each other.

Alikiona²⁵ (She was Chastened) is a minor play of Hussein's but it holds interest because besides being one of his early efforts, it is the only one where he has tried to employ farce and slapstick comedy devices at a sustained rate. The play can be characterized as a morality following the traditional methods of folk-tales and narratives where the evil doers, the cheaters, the thieves somehow get their right deserts at the end. One reaps what one sows, is the central idea of the play. The story follows the antics of a woman who goes to visit her lover but tells her husband she'll be at her mother's. When she returns with all the pretence of having just seen her mother, she is told that the old woman is dead and was buried while she was 'visiting her'. The play opens with Saida and her lover, Abdallah, flirting and playing with each other through their words and actions. When the husband comes in, Abdallah has just enough time to dive under the bed and leave it to Saida to handle the situation. There follows both comedy and farce as Saida tries to draw the husband's attention away from under the bed and provides her lover with a way to escape. The effect is both 'Vichekesho' in the best tradition and a Molière type of comedy found in Tartuffe and The Would be Gentleman. Saida is contradictory in her actions as well as accompanying them with conflicting statements. Her actions we are led to believe do not come from an inexperienced person forced to be 'creative under pressure'

but the ingenuity of practice once again called upon to improvise and get away with things. In scene three Hussein shows his capacity to play with words to elicit a comedic effect while two men are discussing the death of Saida's mother:

Abudu: In short, I want to say that Saida's mother is not with us.

Omari: She has travelled.

Abudu: Precisely - she has travelled - a long journey.

Omari: A long journey? To do what?

Abudu: Her master* has called her.

Omari: Hm, I didn't know that Saida's mother has a master.

Abudu: Everybody has a Master - every man, old and young have a Master (Silence)

Omari: When is she coming back?²⁶

(* In Kiswahili the word 'bwana' can be used to mean master or husband, thus Omari's confusion.)

In the last scene the whole tone of the play changes to melodrama. While Omari calmly watches her, Saida goes through a monologue which is at first happy as she discusses home and the gifts she has brought; then to suspicion and nervousness as Omari's silence nags her. Finally she begs to be beaten as punishment when she learns about her mother. Omari who had prepared the whip at the beginning of the scene does not use it on her. Her torment is enough punishment as he calmly tells her:

I will not beat you

(Silence)

If you try, you'll make the wake
 ... Everyone will be glad to see you.
 Your father.

(Saida puts her hands on her ears while murmuring: be quiet.)

Your grandmother. All your relatives.²⁷

Hussein makes Saida a very frivolous person. Except in the last scene, she is shown to be a greedy, material hungry person who uses other people to get what she wants. From the husband she expects the security of a home and new 'khangas' every so often. The lover is just another material source since the husband cannot give her everything. But Saida's whole world is frivolous and materialistic. At the end of scene one Saida and her friend, Mama Pili, are discussing the impending wedding of the latter's youngest sister. Not only will this wedding be the biggest ever to be held in Dar-es-Salaam's biggest hall, but the furniture has been ordered from Nairobi, Kenya and the bride's veil from Europe. It is a world of competition for material goods and doing better than the next man. In the end people like Saida are caught in their own greedy ends. Their frustration is not based on realization of their wrong doing but rather they have been stupid enough to be caught. The characters in Alikiona are too superficial to gain the audience's sympathies. At the end when Saida displays such soul-rending emotions we are somehow detached, knowing that it could be another act on her part to con the husband and us. We remain unmoved. Hussein seems to direct his readers and audience towards rejecting the characters and activities portrayed. As such, the work is a morality play which draws attention and condemns

behavioural and social patterns of individuals and the groups they represent.

Hussein's reputation as a playwright of note was established with his Kinjeketile which was published and saw its first performance in 1969. (The English version was published in 1970.)²⁸

Kinjeketile is a play about the struggles for liberation, its actors and the forces which are unleashed in the process of freedom. The actions of the participants in liberation as well as their response to the forces which hinder or uphold its attainment are the central theme of the play. Kinjeketile brought Hussein national and international recognition and established him as a playwright to watch in East Africa. Like Rotimi's Ovonramuwen Nogbaisi²⁹, and Micere and Ngugi's The Trial of Dedan Kimathi³⁰, Kinjeketile comes from history. This is both the specific historical moment of the past but it also has a relevance to the present and future of Tanzania. So we turn briefly to the Maji Maji uprising of 1905 for which Kinjeketile was the spiritual mentor and where Hussein found his inspiration.

In his article, 'Tanzania under German and British Rule', John Iliffe has outlined the political and economic causes of Maji Maji as well as the social and political ramifications of this uprising. After consolidating their administration structure in 1889, the Germans turned to economic development of the then Tanganyika:

They tried three methods: they started plantations of tropical crops, employing many African labourers; they assisted Europeans to farm in the highlands, and they encouraged or forced Africans to grow cash crops in order to pay taxes.³¹

One of the cash crops introduced was cotton which was forced to be grown in the South including the coastal areas, Morogoro and Kilosa. The cotton schemes brought great suffering, hardship and brutal exploitation. One understands, for example, why the Wazaramo refused to accept the 35 cents they were each offered for a whole year's work. The workers saw fighting as the only solution to their plight. So in 1905, they uprooted a few cotton plants as a sign of their defiance and the Maji Maji uprising was on. Maji Maji was not the only resistance against colonialism but it was one of the most important because it united many tribes to fight together and paved the way for the nationalist movement later which adopted its methods. At the centre of the rebellion was Kinjeketile who claimed to have been given water (maji) with magical powers which would protect all the initiated against German bullets. The uprising failed but the political and ideological triumph lived on to inspire future liberation struggles as well as artistic creations.

Kinjeketile, Hussein's play based on the Maji Maji uprising has taken these events and created a work of art. As he himself says in the introduction to the play, 'Kinjeketile is not a historical evocation of the real man. Kinjeketile here is a creature of the imagination, and although the "two men" closely resemble one another in their actions, they are not identical'.³² Hussein calls for his audience to evaluate his play through his artistic intentions and thus 'its failure or successes should be gauged against rules determining a work of art'.³³ Etherton says that Hussein announces 'a deliberate artistic distortion

in his recreation of the character of Kinjeketile the leader of the Maji Maji'.³⁴ But when one looks at the central subject matter of Hussein's play, the nature and development of a liberation struggle, the distortion is in actual fact a clarification of the political role of the historical Kinjeketile. Kinjeketile, the artistic creation, is only one of the actors in the events of the play which once begun have to follow their course because of Kinjeketile's strength and in spite of his weaknesses. So one would have to conclude that the major focus of the play is not Kinjeketile's inner conflict, as Mbughuni seems to think³⁵, but the necessity of liberation and the conflicts and contradictions which arise as it progresses towards its inevitable end. Hussein is concerned with 'the structure of resistance' not only to colonialism but to all other aggressive 'isms' from which the oppressed must struggle to free themselves. What makes Kinjeketile great as a man is not because he harbours conflicting elements, which pull him apart but because he grows in his understanding of the political processes. Through Kinjeketile, Hussein draws his audience to achieve a higher level of historical and political consciousness. Etherton has described this way of awakening the audience thus:

They (the audience) are brought to an understanding of a specific contradiction, and become aware of living through contradiction in general - contradiction being when things start happening, apparently inexplicably, in the opposite way to what is intended; or when things start happening negatively as the direct result of a series of positive actions.³⁶

Hussein achieves this in Kinjeketile as will be shown later.

The scenes which unfold the action of the play are short and

either dramatized or narrated. Hussein exercises an economy of words and actions which gives no room to anything that does not contribute to central meaning. In the first act, Kinjeketile is introduced as a man full of mysteries and special powers but only through what other people say of him. Hussein concentrates in this act in showing the cruelties and hardships underlying the people's rebellion. There is famine, injustice, forced labour, beatings and rape. When the men meet secretly, the question is 'How long are we going to remain meek and silent? Are we going to allow ourselves to be persecuted in our own country?' The rape of Kitunda's daughter is not to provide character motivation for Kitunda and justify his subsequent involvement in the struggle but is a symbolic representation of the rape of the whole land by foreigners. Kitunda's wife's words are both a lament and a rebuke to the whole society. She indicts not only the German oppressors but also all those who helped or did nothing while the colonialists entrenched themselves. At their secret meeting the men can't decide on an immediate course of action. While some are advocating 'war now' because 'death is better than this life', Kitunda calls for unity of the tribes first, organization and then war. 'It's better to live like this than go to war and lose thousands of our men. And the few who will survive will get the same treatment, or worse, as before'.³⁷ The scene is full of grey and red colours, fog and fire; dust and impending blood. The people's position of doubts and unclear direction is summed up by Kitunda who says that his 'head is full of fog' but sees at the same time the fire that will come out of the smoke - the

inevitability of war as a result of present conditions.

Act two is the longest in the play which begins with Kinjeketile's answer to the people's problem of unity and ends with the beginning of the war. Kinjeketile is possessed by the river spirit Hongo and after staying in the river for 24 hours, emerges carrying water in a small pot and a fly-whisk. Still in a trance he talks to the people:

Behold,
the sun has risen,
and it shines forth
through clouds of smoke and fog.
Behold,
the rays of the sun
banish from your eyes
clouds of smoke and fog,
that hid a brother from a brother

...
We will unite and we will be one body.³⁸

Through unity, the people will gain freedom. The water and the whisk he brought will be the instruments to use in destroying the Red Earth:

He who partakes of this water no harm will befall him.
No bullet will penetrate his body.³⁹

Kitunda is ordained military commander to train the fighters for in spite of the protection of the water he wants his people to learn how to fight and how to use guns. The water (Maji) cry is picked up and Maji Maji becomes both a slogan and a propelling force to action. Now that they've got the 'water' the people are impatient to start the war. But as the days pass Kinjeketile is troubled especially after he learns that during his trance he had said that after victory, the people would become under the rule of another alien power. He feels cheated by the spirit Hongo who possessed him:



Figure 7: Kinjeketile in a trance, Act 2 scene 2.

Figure 8: Preparing to fight oppression, Acts 2 & 3.



Figures 7 & 8: Kinjeketile, UDSM, 1974.

If this is Hongo, then why does he say we will be the children of Seyyid Said after winning the war? Why does he help us? Why get rid of the white man, only to usher in an Arab?⁴⁰

Kinjeketile is confronted by the contradictions in his faith and wants time to find answers aroused by doubt. But the men are impatient and Kitunda accuses Kinjeketile of cheating the people by inventing the water. Kinjeketile remains steadfast in his conviction of the necessity of unity and struggle for liberation but now it is he rather than Kitunda who pleads for the necessity to be militarily prepared. While Kinjeketile hesitates, events overtake him. He understands this and summarizes his dilemma:

A man gives birth to a ... word. And that word ... grows ... it grows bigger and bigger. Finally, it becomes bigger than the man who gave it birth ...⁴¹

What he has instigated cannot be stopped and the people start the war in the midst of his pleading for patience. In the end, he resigns to the wishes of the people because what he has given birth to has not only enslaved him but will eventually destroy him. It will also, however, build the momentum towards the people's liberation.

The events of the war are partly narrated and partly dramatized in the third and fourth act. The Maji Maji warriors lose a lot of men, the war and part of their traditional faith. Kinjeketile is taken prisoner but refuses to recant the 'magical powers' of the water. Kinjeketile understands the implication of the colonists' demand:

Kinjeketile: They want me to say that the water was a lie. Where was the lie?

Kitunda: Was the water true? Did you believe in it?

(Kinjeketile laughs long and bitterly, a pause)

Kinjeketile: Do you know what they will say tomorrow? The officer will say that we were wrong. He will tell our children that we were wrong in fighting him. He will tell that to our children Kitunda. That to fight for one's country is wrong. And he wants to say that the water was a lie ... I will not say that. A word has been born. Our children will tell their children about this word. Our great grandchildren will hear of it. One day the word will cease to be a dream, it will be a reality.⁴²

Kinjeketile understands the contradiction. To renounce the water is to renounce freedom. The water was not magical and did not protect the people but it brought the people together for a common goal.

Kinjeketile's last statement which underlines his acceptance of his dilemma has been building up earlier in the play in which Hussein makes Kinjeketile contradict himself. In scene V of Act II, Kitunda comes to urge Kinjeketile to give the word to start the war but Kinjeketile hesitates. He is full of doubt about Hongo and pleads for time. He wants a further sign and a revelation from God which will clarify what Hongo has said through him. This doubt in Hongo is challenged immediately afterwards when the representative of the Wazaramo tribe comes to confirm whether Hongo and their spirit Kolelo are one and the same. Kinjeketile replies timidly, 'Hongo is merely another name for Kolelo'. He knows that to deny Hongo at this moment is to lose the participation of the Wazaramo in the fight and so he consciously contradicts his own feelings for the sake of unity.

The use of spiritual elements within Kinjeketile is of prime

importance in understanding the hero's attitudes and Hussein's intentions. They also possess the element of contradiction. The spiritual elements are portrayed with a duality of opposing or contradictory elements. The religious belief of the participants of Maji Maji centres around a hierarchy of spirits. First of all there was Bokero, the spirit responsible for life and death. Hongo was under Bokero and acted as an intermediary between the higher spirit and man using mediums and acts of possession as his communication channels.⁴³ Kinjeketile is possessed by Hongo but the spirit unleashes two opposing elements which are contradictory in his character and thus presents Kinjeketile with his dilemma. The people do not share in Kinjeketile's realization of the contradictions in both Hongo and the water. They are mystified by it. The presence of the contradictions and the people's mystification in their own beliefs are Hussein's vehicles to establish the necessity of demystification in the process of liberation. Blind acceptance of any social structure can work against desired objectives. At the same time, a clear identification of progressive elements within such a structure can provide strength and direction.

While contradiction is the strongest feature in Kinjeketile, Hussein uses other dramatic elements in the structure of the play. The most important are repetition of situations, reversal of character positions and contrast in character development. This is especially shown in the characters of Kitunda and Kinjeketile. Kitunda is the pragmatist whose leadership role grows in the play and is in the line

of fire. Kinjeketile meanwhile withdraws and becomes more and more isolated through the play. Their relationship towards each other is not only reversed at points in the play but is also repeated and mirrored in their relationships to other people. In Act I scene II the people accuse Kitunda of being a coward, a stooge of the Germans and not having enough courage to start the war. The situation is repeated in Act II scene V but this time it is Kitunda who is accusing Kinjeketile of being a coward, a liar and a non-believer:

Act I scene II:

Kitunda: Let us wait a while longer. Let us plan ...

An old man: No, we must fight! ... And Hongo will help us.

Kitunda: Hongo is a powerful spirit, true, but he has no power over matters of life and death.

Old Man: (standing up) You blaspheme! ...

In Act II scene V Kinjeketile asks for more time before giving the word to start the war:

Kinjeketile: ... I must wait for a revelation - from God.

(Kitunda starts)

Kitunda: You blaspheme! ... Don't you believe in Hongo?

In the two scenes the two men's situation has been reversed. In the beginning Kitunda was the cautious one amongst his eager people. As his confidence grows, Kinjeketile's weakens. Kitunda is caught in a dilemma and the process of understanding the contradictions starts for him. In answer to Kitunda's threat to expose him to the people, Kinjeketile replies:

Go tell them. And by tomorrow there won't be a single soul out there. And you will be under the white man's rule for ever.

Although he mistrusts Kinjeketile, Kitunda cannot expose him because that would mean ending the cause of freedom. So in Act III scene II, Kitunda is again the pragmatic military leader who has accepted that neither the water nor Hongo will win the battle for his people. This attitude earns him a challenge from those under him, the same challenge he himself had given Kinjeketile earlier is repeated in Act III scene III when Ngulumbalyo confronts Kitunda.⁴⁴

The strong sense of contradiction which is part of the structure as well as the character and thematic development exposes the process of liberation and revolution as complex. In Kinjeketile one is led to observe, in the words of Professor Fiebach who directed the first production of the play that 'political wishful thinking, mobilizing masses in the name of ideological clichés, and blind fervour are no substitute for a revolutionary strategy that has to include and consider real potential rationally'.⁴⁵ Both Kitunda and Kinjeketile in their various ways come to this realization but in a way are unable to extricate themselves from their dilemmas. In their defeat, however, Hussein projects optimism for future struggles and the play ends with these two opposing elements.

The language of the Kiswahili version of the play is much richer with differentiations in dialects, colloquialisms and imagery which have not translated themselves into English. Whereas characters can be more easily identified in Kiswahili, in the English version, they tend to

blend together as a faceless entity. A strong cohesive unity is gained but the individuals who make up the entity are lost. The question of language in Africa is not only a political one but as a theatre feature, an aesthetic one. Not only the accessibility of the work to particular audiences is important but also the texture of the work is a contributing input in the form and content of any work. The contrasting texture of Kinjeketile in two languages proves the point.

Hussein must have realized that there was imbalance between the dramatic and the narrative scenes of Kinjeketile. In 1976, he wrote several new scenes which were to be included in the play's 1977 Festac production in Lagos, Nigeria. The most important of the new scenes were a prologue and an epilogue spoken by Kitunda.⁴⁶ This balanced the style of the play giving it a more epic structure than previously. But even without these new scenes, Hussein manages to clarify Kinjeketile's historical role. In retrospect, Kinjeketile's questions and visions which tormented him stand as prophecies in the neo-colonial era. Kinjeketile had asked, 'if this Seyyid Said, could with our consent enslave us body and mind, he would be a far worse enemy than the German. He could rule us without ever setting foot in this country'.⁴⁷ Neo-colonialism and imperialism has forced many African countries to be in a dependency situation to the metropolitan economic and political control, for the most part with the cooperation of the countries in question. Oppression and exploitation continues with new faces and new colours of the people who have stepped into the shoes of the colonial masters. In his following play, Hussein picks up this

thread of the neo-colonial situation in Tanzania and makes it the focus of his content and structure in Mashetani, a play published in 1971 and first performed in 1977.

Mashetani (The Devils)⁴⁸ exposes the contradictions and conflicts of the post-independence era in Africa generally and in Tanzania specifically. Its central idea is that the eruption of neo-colonial exploitation, greed and oppression reside in the perpetuation of colonial structures which independence was unable to break. Delusion and selfish motives have mystified the independence reality to the extent that social evils have permeated all social practices. Besides condemning neo-colonial values, the play advocates the importance of a critical consciousness which understands neo-colonial reality and aims for cultural change. The Arusha Declaration is seen as an example of a positive step towards the destruction of the economic and social 'devils'.

Mashetani perplexed many people because of its complexity in structure, metaphor and philosophical overtones. Unlike Kinjeketile which is straightforward, Mashetani is developed through role playing, emotional and psychological relationships, through contradictions while exploring socio-political processes of capitalism and socialism.

The setting of the play is Tanzania between 1964 and 1967, before the Arusha Declaration. In 1961, Tanzania mainland (then Tanganyika) received independence from Britain. Many educated Africans were called upon to fill the jobs in government and institutions left open by the departing colonial masters. These people soon became 'black Europeans'

in their way of life with their big houses, cars, attitudes and ostentatious living. Okot pBitek has described this post-independence situation thus:

Independence falls like a buffalo and the hunters
 Rush to it with drawn knives
 Sharp, shining knives
 for carving the carcass
 And if your chest
 is small, bony and weak
 They push you off
 and if your knife is blunt
 You get the dung on your elbow.⁴⁹

Independence opened the doors of economic and political opportunity for a few who found it convenient to shut out the others who were the majority. About the same time in 1964, the Sultan of Zanzibar was overthrown and the new government nationalized land and the big farms. Some of those who lost their land bitterly left the island to settle on the coast of the mainland.⁵⁰ The two main characters of the play come from these backgrounds. Kitaru's family belongs to the 'nouveaux riches' of the post independence era while Juma's comes from the impoverished elites of Zanzibar now living on the mainland. The two are friends and fellow students at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. They harbour a love-hate relationship which they manage to hide from each other except when they are playing 'their game'. Their friendship, however, is undermined by political and economic tensions steeped in their history. The conflict then becomes not personal but between social processes which affect individuals. The pull of the feudal past is very strong for Juma while Kitaru is tempted by the capitalism of his parents. In his search to understand himself and his

relationship to Juma, Kitaru discovers the workings of the world around him. Hussein's concern is like Ngugi's in the Homecoming where he points out that the real problem faced by African countries is not tribalism, as he thought earlier, but imperialism.⁵¹ What bothers both Hussein and Ngugi is the fact that few leaders have taken any steps to rectify the situation in which the Kioi's and the Baba Kitaru's have entrenched themselves in political and economic power. Mashetani is set on the eve of the Arusha Declaration and Hussein seems to applaud Nyerere's decision to tackle neo-colonial exploitation in which the expectations of independence have been betrayed and the majority are crying:

We are without clothes
 We are without shelter
 The power of our hands goes to feed three people:
 Imperialists from Europe
 Imperialists from America
 Imperialists from Japan
 And of course their local watchmen.⁵²

Hussein begins Mashetani with a play within a play - a device which has been used by other writers of political plays like Osofisan in The Chattering and the Song.⁵³ Juma and Kitaru invite the audience to watch them enact the play or game of 'the devil and the human' using a baobab tree as their setting. Juma is the devil and Kitaru is the human:

Devil: Do you know who I am?
 I am the devil
 I am not a jin or a priest
 I am the devil
 My power cannot be contained
 My goodness cannot be measured
 My evilness cannot be spoken

I build
 I destroy.
 I elevate
 I do as I please.⁵⁴

The devil has many faces and claims to be a friend of the human but he demands humility, adoration, fear and the recognition of his powers. The human is humiliated and tormented but he obeys the other's commands until the devil is satisfied. As a reward the devil gives the human a secret 'word' which he is forced to assimilate within his being. He is then received by the devil as a friend:

My dear friend, my intimate friend. A friend for ever and always. I receive you. I rejoice in this day, the day of your birth. From the darkest womb into the world of white light.⁵⁵

The new man created by the devil, then seeks out his tormentor/benefactor. He has been given new power and energy to confront him. He wants to kill the devil because as the human says the 'word' given him in secret was not a gift. 'It was poison. That was your soul and spirit which you wanted to infuse into my being'.⁵⁶ After playing hide and seek with the human the devil agrees to be killed but on condition that the human agrees to celebrate with the devil before the former kills him, choose the type of the celebration and not answer the question, 'Have you heard of anybody who slaughtered himself?'. After dancing a waltz and saying farewell to each other, the human kills the devil. The human is ecstatic at what he has done and celebrates while scorning 'those who were high and boastful, where are they now?' But soon doubts assail him. Is the devil really dead? What did he mean by 'have you heard of anybody who slaughtered himself?' Why is he

losing his faculty of movement? At first he blames the devil who he is not sure if he has killed but then resolves that the fault lies within himself because he does not know the truth himself, nor of his actions.

In this first part, Hussein has exposed his version of the attainment of national independence with the devil representing the colonial masters and the human the nationalist leaders. This scene exposes the farcical nature of the independence process. The independence leaders are shown to be creations of their colonial predecessors. The leaders are victims and the victory of independence is a hollow one. The victim - the devil has called the tune and provided the instruments of his death with the assurance that this death is only a symbol. He leaves himself behind. The devil allows himself to be killed and provides the knife which kills him but not before he and his executioner have exchanged a hand-shake and a smile like 'two dear relatives'. At the end, when the human vows to take himself on a journey to discover the truth, one feels that the truth is behind him as exposed through the play-game Hussein uses. The future will only bring the awareness of whether one accepts to continue to be manipulated by an outside force or not.

The second section of the play is set in Kitaru's head. It is Kitaru's journey into understanding the forces of history. His relationship with Juma becomes more strained as the understanding of that history widens. While Kitaru reads 'An Outline of African History', studies law but is interested in history, and views the

University as a place for acquiring education and skills, Juma reads 'The Essence of Colonial Heritage', studies history and looks at the University as a place to enable one to accumulate money and luxury items in the future. Their discussion, however, instead of bringing them together, forces to the surface their animosity and opposing ambitions. Kitaru becomes aware of the preoccupation of his parents in the accumulation of material wealth, in being called 'masters' and their lack of sensitivity. He is confused and tries to find answers to why things are the way they are. The parents in their turn do not understand Kitaru with his obsession with 'Mashetani'. They call in doctors who diagnose that Kitaru is not mad but has 'brain fatigue' or neurosis. 'He is worried that he is sick and prefers the sickness to anxiety. He is afraid of being in a state of anxiety'.⁵⁷ But the doctors think the sickness is not real, a product of Kitaru's imagination.

The driving force behind Juma's thinking is his grandmother who scorns the 'nouveaux riches' and longs for the past glorious age of the Zanzibar elite. She scorns the Kitarus of the world with their newly acquired wealth and airs. Her people who were feudal lords were better. They had wealth, they had slaves and were civilized. Suddenly all was taken away to be given to people who didn't know what ruling meant. She defends Juma and moulds his thinking. Juma knows what the old woman is up to but cannot extricate himself from her grip:

Grandmother exhales poison
Poison or love.⁵⁸

He cannot share his understanding of his grandmother's intentions with Kitaru because Kitaru will not understand. Moreover, 'a tree wound is heard through the smell only, not shown' because of the shame accompanying it. He decides that there is nothing he can do.

In part four, Kitaru wakes up from a disturbing dream in which he has seen himself and all those around him as birds of prey:

Kitaru: ... I don't know how long I slept. But of a sudden I found myself with feathers. I grew feathers, my father grew feathers, everybody and everything grew feathers. Many, many feathers. Suddenly the feathers turned into wings, and we were flying in the sky. At first it was pleasurable, great pleasure. But then we became worried. We couldn't do anything. The wings flew us where they wanted. Things flew in the sky - houses, cars and us - they carried us. I remember that I began to worry. I started to pluck out my feathers. But every time I plucked, others grew. They blocked my breathing. Others grew, bigger and stronger than those. I started becoming anxious. True anxiety. Am I a man or a bird? I asked and thought. My parents called a doctor. The doctor also had feathers like us; so many more. So he told me I was pampering my brain. And if I continued to be anxious like this, I will become impotent. When I heard the word impotent, my strength left me. I saw myself falling down, falling through the sky. I was falling but could not help it. My arms were not working. The brain only. Then I resolved that I must rid myself of this anxiety.⁵⁹

Kitaru believes that the solution to his 'problem' lies within the game-play which he and Juma enact. But Juma refuses to play the game when Kitaru suggests they switch roles so that he Kitaru will play Shetani and Juma Binadamu. They get into a serious fight over this and are forced to part. 'He who climbs up a ladder and he who climbs down a ladder cannot hold hands', says Juma. Juma lives in the past while

Kitaru lives in the present. They are torn apart by their respective social classes.

Hussein is not the only one who has used the idea of Mashetani to represent the metaphorical presence of evil in African society. In Ngugi's Devil on the Cross devils are everywhere in Kenya society, exploiting, oppressing and colluding with metropolitan capitalism to continue and find new ways of becoming better robbers and thieves.⁶⁰ But Ngugi's devils take their model from the Christian Bible and mythology whereas Hussein's are a Swahili phenomenon who belong to various 'tribes' each having different characteristics:

Each spirit has a name and also a distinctive personality. Most are capricious or mischievous and some are downright malignant. A spirit is capable of possessing a person in such a way as to cause mental disturbance and physical sickness.⁶¹

Both Kitaru and Juma are possessed by Shetani who can only be expelled by exorcism. Juma chooses to live with his Shetani while Kitaru is too confused to take the first step towards exorcism which is the acceptance of the presence of Shetani.

Kitaru, like the other characters in Mashetani, is a social and political typical representation. They are representatives and guardians of their social position but, unlike some of the others, Kitaru goes through a process of self-awareness. Kitaru's journey into self understanding is a small ripple but an important one in the big waves of social greed conservatism and exploitation. In order to exorcise the Shetani, it has first to be identified and then put through a dance ritual. Writing on the eve of the Arusha Declaration,

Hussein must have seen the necessity for the political and economic exorcism which followed. The feathers had to be plucked out to avoid more feathers growing. As in Kitaru's case, the individuals who attain awareness for the need of exorcism must accept an inner and outer journey to find themselves in their historical environment. Hussein sees theatre as playing a role in this journey. Kitaru understands more about the social and economic situation through the repetition of the game-play. The technique is dialectic as both the protagonist and the audience gain their social consciousness through the play. In this Hussein is again very close to Brecht who saw in the theatre a social and artistic institution not only in the subject matter but also in the sense of 'co-responsibility for the fate of one's society'. This sense of responsibility to one's awareness towards social forces differs from individual to individual. Take the case of Mfaume in the play. The oppressed, the workers, know that they are oppressed but they are too busy surviving. Meanwhile their social reality is mystified by the presence of traditional beliefs and attitudes.

But Mfaume's statement that 'there are devils around ... their presence is real but our eyes have been only shut, so we don't see them' is also a comment on the mystification of neo-colonial exploitation and oppression. These elements are present but the people's eyes have been carefully turned away from understanding them. The few like the Kitarus of the world are the only ones who have the time and the tools to come to some kind of social awareness. Hussein makes the point that critical awareness of the political and economic

reality is a necessary step towards a cultural transformation.

Hussein builds his play on images of communication - the process in which one individual relates to another - and the success or failure depending on social and economic factors which inform it. He uses one of the most basic human relationships, that of friendship, to illustrate his point. At the centre are Kitaru and Juma who want to be friends but they can't. They are not able to talk to each other honestly as true friends should. They cannot look each other in the eye and so their friendship turns to aversion. 'What they said was not what they meant and what they meant they did not speak.'⁶² So instead they hide behind their laughter and games to avoid some basic truths. The failure of this friendship lies outside the individuals. It lies with economic and social factors which make friendship and communication impossible. They are both pulled apart by their historical circumstances. Hussein makes their search to understand these circumstances an act of love, a kind of searching to find a meaningful relationship in their friendship. Just as the source of their aversion is external so is the final true friendship to be reached by the resolution of the external forces. Kitaru realizes the need to press on in the struggle to come to grips with the source of their conflicts. Juma is not sure and at the end of the play he leaves while Kitaru shouts after him that they must try again to get together the following day. Even though Hussein leaves the play thus open, the outcome is in a way obvious because if Kitaru's search for meaning in their lives is an act of love, then one anticipates that

Juma will return the next day because communication for them has just begun.

The other characters can all be grouped in terms of their relations in communication. The petty bourgeoisie are close to each other because of class considerations while these are separated from the lower classes because of labour relations. In both cases, no true communication takes place because oppression and exploitation negates it. Family relations are also determined by external factors. Mama and Baba Kitaru are joined together by the materials they possess while the loss of possessions is undermining Juma's family. As Kitaru and Juma become conscientized, the gap between them and their families widens. One gets the picture of two large circles vying with each other for space in a square. From each of the circles an individual is trying to get out while their families are trying to pull them back by standing on the heads of others. Kitaru's and Juma's families are the two antagonistic forces working against true liberation. On one hand is the feudal and on the other, the consumption and greedy values of the new economic elite which Kitaru's parents represent. Hussein makes his protagonists struggle against both.

The idea of communication is also represented in the laughter which is a major element in the play. The pervasive laughter is a metaphor and a representation of *mashetami* - the devils and the corruptive forces within society. This is not joyful laughter but forced, unnatural and disconcerting laughter. It inhibits, comments and imposes itself on communication. The laughter, however, appears

on two levels in the play: the individual and the general. While the individual laughter makes the people involved appear superficial, the general laughter makes communication almost impossible in spite of the shoutings. Again, here, Hussein underscores the external forces which retard meaningful communication. Hussein makes much use of silences throughout the play. These punctuate the breakdown of communication and points of withdrawal into the self for the characters. For the audience, these silences force reflection on what is happening, and come to grips with why they are where they are. The silences like the play within the play are used then as processes of confrontation. Sometimes the confrontation is between the characters and the audience come about it indirectly and sometimes there is a direct confrontation between the audience and their reality. While talking to Juma, Kitaru suddenly sees his parents in a scenario where their petty bourgeois preoccupations are exposed. The confrontation is between Kitaru and the life the parents represent. It is as if Kitaru is replaying this scene in his head and so certain factors stand out and he sees the parents in a new light. He stands outside the activities to observe and can thus make an analysis of the situation. In scene II of the third part, Hussein creates a confrontation between the audience and their reality. Juma is sitting alone in a bar. At another table is a group of men typically pre-occupied with power which comes out of material possessions and their position as the rightful heirs to economic and social power as bequeathed to them by the departed Europeans. The audience is made aware that the

situation in the play reflects the neo-colonial situation they are in.

The images of communication are strengthened by an atmosphere full of evil spirits and the sense of exorcism. The first scene which is part of the play within a play sets an imposing mood for the rest of the play. The scene is set under a baobab tree, a common setting for exorcising evil spirits especially amongst the coastal peoples. It is a place where the spirits inhabiting a man are made to reveal themselves and then exorcised. Hussein uses the place for a similar purpose but uses the setting as a metaphor for the whole play in which the characters are made to come to terms with their particular *mashetani* and agree to be exorcised. The first production of the play shows to what extent the baobab, the devils and the sense of exorcism were made much use of and dictated the performance milieu. The set was dominated by the baobab tree structure at the centre of the performing area. The areas such as Kitaru's or Juma's house were set on either side under the tree's branches. The baobab was therefore, a constant reminder of the lurking devils and the process of exorcism taking place. Its presence summarized the ideas as well as the intention of the play in performance.

After Mashetani, Hussein's next two works were published together in 1976.⁶³ These works, Jogoo Kijijini (The Cock in the Village) and Ngao ya Jadi (The Traditional Shield) are based on narrative performance forms. Their theme, however, is still the process of liberation, the conflicts and struggles of individuals involved in that process. Both explore the role of the leaders in the process and the

effect of their actions during and after the attainment of freedom. While the leadership in Ngao ya Jadi is looked at from a social and political angle which is straightforward, Jogoo Kijijini is more complex in which the characters and the events need philosophical and metaphorical interpretations as well. Both plays present the argument that how well a leadership fulfills its duties to society depends both on the character of the individuals in leadership position as well as the direction assigned to them by their societies. In fulfilling their duties, however, the leaders can unleash contradictions which affect them and the process of liberation itself.

With the publication of Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi in 1976, the trend which was set in 1974 by Mukotani Ruyendo's The Contest picked up momentum.⁶⁴ This was the adaptation of traditional material and techniques for a contemporary reality. But the adaptation as shown in the two works is very complex in both its metaphorical presence and structural development - a fact which made many people who had complained silently about Hussein's complexity with Mashetani, protest loudly about the obscurity of Jogoo and Jadi in both theme and structure. The criticism is unjustified, however, because one encounters in both these works, a thematic and form clarity which endows them an aesthetic uniqueness. In these works, Hussein combines the traditional forms of story telling and riddling - a combination which has never been tried before. He poses his riddles not in the traditional way of short formulations but by using whole stories which contain hidden meaning the audience is supposed to untangle. One can

say that the story and the riddle exist as metaphors for each other. Not only that but the traditional stories themselves become metaphors of contemporary social realities which are strengthened by the aesthetic structure. The meaning then results from the entanglement of the metaphors at both the structural and thematic levels.

In most parts of Tanzania, story telling usually begins with a salutation. Along the coast the opening goes like this:

Story-teller: Paukwa! [Once there was!]

Audience: Pakawa! [Yes, there was!]

Story-teller: Hapozamani, palitokea ... [Long ago, there was ...]

The Paukwa/Pakawa salute may be repeated several times until the storyteller is satisfied that he has the audience's attention before he starts his narration. Both Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi begin with this traditional salute of story-telling. The end, however, does not present the audience with a social equilibrium and resolution so characteristic of story-telling. The two works end with riddles. In the riddle tradition, when the audience fails to 'break' the riddle, the poser demands to be given a town (metaphorically) before he reveals the meaning of the riddle. Hussein, however, does not give answers to his riddles in spite of the fact that he has been given and accepted a city of his choice. Maybe after solving the riddle, the audience can demand the city back from the author. The riddle characteristic of the works is also shown by the choice of 'unpopular' or not too familiar words in the telling of the story. Riddles in their traditional forms exhibit obscure word and structural formulations.

There is departure from the familiar and everyday usage of language in riddles which carry cultural connotations. Hussein follows this tradition by using not only words which are not in use everyday but also by his preference of poetry over prose. In the handling of poetry as well as the other formal characteristics like riddling, story-telling, the relationship between performers and audience, the development of theme to plot etc., Hussein sometimes stays close to the traditional patterns but at other times completely departs from them. This will be shown more clearly when dealing with the stories, themes and structures of the individual works.

Of the two works, Ngao ya Jadi approaches its traditional model the closest. There are many stories traditionally which deal with the presence of a big snake or serpent in a community. Its presence usually causes grief and suffering amongst the people until a courageous person arises to kill the serpent by chopping his seven heads one by one. After a long struggle the hero succeeds in chopping off the last head restoring peace and social equilibrium. One such story is from the Baganda of East Africa. Sesota, the serpent of the tale was harrassing and oppressing the people of a village until one day, a farmer, armed with a flute and a pot entices Sesota to enter the pot by hypnotizing him with his beautiful singing. As a reward, the villagers made the farmer their chief. Hussein follows the same plot up to a point. He retains the name of the serpent, Sesota but instead of seven he has seventy heads. This expands the menace which needs not the original flute and pot but a shield and a spear - the instruments

of death and war. When Sesota is killed, there is great celebration but whereas the original story ends here, Hussein continues. After a peaceful lull the hero finds out that he has been contaminated by poison from the snake. In trying to cleanse himself, he leaves his people to tend to his 'sickness'. He comes to the realization that in fighting against cruelty and oppression, the fighter invariably catches the very things he is fighting against. In his absence, all manner of evils crop up. Exploitations, economic sabotage and even the wearing of the serpent's scales become the order of the day. Because of these, people become anxious and seek out the 'Mtemi' (ruler) to come and rescue them again. They fear that Sesota might be getting ready to rise again. When they find out that the Mtemi has gone, they destroy the spear and the shield he used to liberate them and go home to await anxiously the second coming of Sesota.

That Hussein has used the post independence African experience to situate his metaphor is clearly evident. But more importantly, the focal point in this work is not the struggle for independence and after but the Arusha Declaration and after in Tanzania. The killing of Sesota in Tanzania came with the Declaration and not with independence and Hussein calls attention to this fact by the reference to the ideological acceptance and support given to the declaration by people from all walks of life. As the play indicates, poems, plays, recitations and novels were written in support of the projected new socialist state. The Arusha euphoria, however, was short lived either because the leadership failed to meet their own objectives or the

'snake-poison' permeated too deeply for a quick cleansing and fresh start. As it has already been shown, part of the rationale for socialism was based on one hand, upon the fundamental human rights of freedom, democracy and dignity and on the other, the African traditional values of communality, responsibility, participation and the absence of acute exploitation of one man by another. These were the instruments of the struggle to implement Arusha - the traditional instruments. In a way Hussein is cautioning to the probability of failure of Arusha and the incursion of more serious exploitative and oppressive elements in society by the wilful or unconscious destruction of those basic elements which identified Arusha for its uniqueness.

There are some parallels between the fable of Jogoo Kijijini and the historical events of a place like Zanzibar. The coming of the Arabs and the institutionalization of a feudal class division created such oppression that their end was inevitable. That end came with the revolution of 1964 which like the lightning Hussein uses in his fable ended the reign of the Sultan. ~~As~~ in other revolutions, that was not the end of the story. While the revolution was the beginning of a new dawn, it was not the end of the social and political problems. Two instances in the fable allude to elements connected with the island. The village where the events of the story are set has a fruit tree called Mkunazi. The name and the tree is more familiar to the inhabitants of the island than the mainland. When newcomers invade the village, they force the natives to carve them a large gate for their houses. Carved doors and gates are important

features of such coastal areas as Bagamoyo and Kilwa but especially Zanzibar. Hussein's intentions, however, are not to recreate the history of Zanzibar but to use specific images which allude to that history but also stand independent of it.

Unlike the lineal presentation of Ngao ya Jadi, Jogoo Kijijini is told in a fragmented manner. Different parts of the story are told as self contained minor stories which are then tied together at the end. The whole fable is like a montage created by separate and yet interconnected events. Jogoo Kijijini tells the events connected with a village which, we are told, was prosperous due to the presence of a fruit tree which fed the people and made them happy. But then, a poisonous creeper strangled and killed the tree. The advent of the creeper coincides with the coming of people from outside the village who oppress and try to supplant the original inhabitants. The newcomers force the natives to build them big houses and beautifully carved gates. Because of their arrogance the newcomers don't heed the warnings of the natives. As a result their houses which are built on grounds protected by ants soon become weak and the gates disintegrate. What the ants don't destroy, a storm clears the rest except for one old woman who narrates the above events to a young man who has made a sudden appearance in the village. The old woman dies soon after telling her story but the young man whose appearance is the result of both personal necessity and factors outside his control decides to offer himself as sacrificial lamb to expiate the evils he has learnt about.

The fable is developed through four major events. The first is about the fruit tree and its relationship to the people until the creeper kills it. The second is the trip of the young man to the village and the factors beyond his control which dictate his appearance there. The old woman's story about the coming of her people makes the third movement and the fable ends with the fourth movement in which the young man makes his momentous decision. Hussein provides linkages between the movements which connect events preceding and following them. There is a cock in the story whose job is to announce the coming of a new day. It is at dawn, one morning, when the cock crows that the young man's story is introduced. After the lightning and the storm the cock fails to crow the following morning, but he is around to watch the old woman and the young man talk. The story of the fruit tree and the poisonous creeper are linked in the third movement when the old lady tells about the coming of her people which coincides with the growth of the poisonous creeper and death of the fruit tree. The storm and lightning which the young man encounters on the way is the same storm which sees the end of the old woman's people. These linkages are subtle rather than direct. This is primarily because Hussein is concerned more on structuring his story on images rather than using straight narrative. The narrative emerges only when the images have been strung together to create a metaphor which is not always easy to unravel.

Several images persist and provide an understanding of the thematic content. One of these is the road. In traditional Kiswahili

story-telling the road symbolizes the journey towards awareness of one's position and the attainment of knowledge and social equilibrium at the end of it. In Jogoo Kijijini, the road is a symbol of both destruction and the continuity of class divisions. This is the road which the old lady's people have followed to come to the village and has caused the division of the village into two. The road as a line is contrasted to the circle around which the original inhabitants built their houses, a practice the newcomers abandoned because of the arrogance of their class position. When the young man enters the village, Hussein makes him avoid the road and instead he follows pathless ways. This underlines the importance of the road as an element which brings oppression and therefore cannot be followed if changes are to be made. The ants, however, are both protectors and destroyers. Building a house on an ant hill is a sure sign that the foundation is weak and there is therefore the inevitability of destruction. The ways of the newcomers could not last because they have been founded on oppression and exploitation. As the destroyers of the newcomers, the ants are also protectors of the old inhabitants of the village.

There is also the village cock who makes up one of the elements of continuity in the village. Except for one day when he loses his voice and fails to crow, the cock is the guardian and protector of the status quo. He is nervous when the young man enters the village but confident that he will continue to fulfill his function as the village cock who ushers in each new day.

Hussein makes much use of contrasting images of life and death, light and darkness, old and young, freedom and oppression. This is exemplified in the relationship between the sole of the foot and the ear of the young man. The sole of the foot is imprisoned in a shoe, in the dark and its complaints are ignored by the ear living in light. This relationship between the ear and the sole of the foot makes the character of the young man complex. Some parts of his body are working against the interest of other parts. This is the same character who offers himself to cleanse the sins of the village. As a metaphorical figure, he is kin to Soyinka's Eman in The Strong Breed.⁶⁵ Like Eman, the young man offers himself as the village 'carrier'. This role of the young man is underlined by using two references of sacrificial victims found in the Koran and in Western literature. These references are made in a form of a question to provoke the audience to reflection. Hussein asks, 'why should the young man make himself a sacrificial lamb in the manner of Keats's heifer or the bull of al-bakari?' Keats's heifer is a reference taken from John Keats's poem 'Ode on a Grecian urn'.⁶⁶ In the fourth stanza of the poem the poet describes a scene of pastoral sacrifice which is serene and pious engraved on an urn:

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
 To what green altar, O mysterious priest
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing low at the skies,
 And all her silken flanks with garlands dressed?
 What little town by river or sea shore,
 or mountain-built with peaceful citadel
 Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
 And little town, thy streets for evermore
 Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
 Why thou art desolate can e'er return.⁶⁷

The 'bull of al-bakari' refers to another sacrificial victim mentioned in the Koran. The Jews were advised by Moses to slaughter a bull as part of a process to unmask a murderer. After a long time of debate the Jews came up with a bull without blemish.⁶⁸ Should the young man in Jogoo Kijijini play the role of the bull and the heifer? Immediately after describing and questioning the role of a sacrificial victim to expiate others' sins, Hussein ends his narrative and freezes the action. This fresco-like freeze with the dead village, the road, the old lady, the village cock and the young man brings to mind Keats's Grecian urn and its engravings. Hussein's freeze, however, leads to different questions when compared to the urn. Keats's 'who are these coming to the sacrifice?' has already been answered by the preceding narrative and images. Hussein's freeze provokes questions about the necessity of the sacrifice and the future of the village as well as the young man. By providing the frozen tableau, the writer is also remaining faithful to the structure of the whole narrative as a riddle. The audience is asked to unscramble the metaphor of the narrative as well as provide an answer to what happens next.

Jogoo Kijijini is narrated through a language which is poetic and economical with textual elements which make Kiswahili story-telling pleasing to the listener. There are repetitions of sounds, rhyming verses but with a multiplicity of rhythms endowing the work with a variety of pace and tempo. Jogoo Kijijini, like Ngao ya Jadi, calls for a story-teller and a chorus. While the chorus responds, urges on and emphasizes the story-teller's narration, the latter focuses his

performance not only in the words but also in various characters appearing in the play. The difficulty for the performer is in the holding of the various threads of the story together and clarifying the interplay of images and metaphors piled on top of each other. The references to not only traditional Kiswahili imagery but also obvious Western and Islamic literary images complicate the accessibility of Jogoo Kijijini to an audience and performers ignorant of the original models. But the consistency of the works in drawing attention to familiar updated forms and content to carry a historical perspective allows the interpretations to be extracted at various levels of understanding and thus appeal to a mixed wider audience. The fact that these works have been performed few times and mostly by the author indicates the reluctance of theatre practitioners to face up to the performance demands which require virtuosity and an imaginative handling of both space and audience participation. The favourable response that these works have received from theatre practitioners looking at them theoretically can only be tested by their endurance on the performance stage as popular expressions. More performances and time might clarify their impact and positions.

Hussein returns to the theme of disillusionment with independence in Arusi (The Wedding) published in 1980.⁶⁹ A peep into the post-independence era shows corruption, betrayal, exploitation of the poor and the fragmentation of human values. These social evils plague both those who have chosen to continue with capitalistic ways as well as those who have opted for a socialist direction. In either system the

masses have lost. But whereas Mashetani gives the sense of impenetrable fog and smoke as invisible witches and devils stir up their brew of evil, Arusi is almost lyrical in its effect. Neo-colonialism is pushed in the background while independence itself becomes the central issue. With Arusi, Hussein has brought forward his poetic skills which he started with Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi. With the poetry, he has interspersed dramatic scenarios which do not rise to a climax but are self-contained with the beat and rhythms of the wedding ceremony always present in the background. Hussein strives to achieve the cumulative effect of the whole play which is metaphorical rather than settle for strong individual scenes with climaxes. In Mashetani, it is the devils who inform the play's texture, so it is the wedding in Arusi which is the point of reference and informing spirit. Like most Hussein plays, the setting is on the coast and this time it is Mombasa in Kenya. Besides the physical setting there is also a psychological setting or scenes in a character's head. Hussein used this device in Mashetani but in Arusi most of the play takes place in one character's vision as opposed to only a section of the play set in Kitaru's head in Mashetani. It is the conscious awareness of one character upon which Hussein builds his play and exposes both that character's and the writer's disillusionment with the wedding-independence experience. Traditionally, a wedding is a celebration to mark the passage of individuals from adolescence to their new status of responsible adults. The individuals seal a contract between themselves and society in which the new responsibilities are agreed upon and

expected to be upheld. Like a wedding, independence is supposed to be a transition of countries from a dependent colonial status to nation states which are responsible for their own affairs. For those who enter marriage or independence, however, the envisioned future is not always what reality turns out to be.

In Anowa, Ama Ata Aidoo looks at contemporary society through the Ghana of a hundred years ago where a young woman meets sterility, exploitation and human greed through a marriage which she had hoped would bring fulfilment, children, democracy and equality. Tragedy results and both Anowa and her husband kill themselves.⁷⁰ Hussein uses the same device of the marriage through the metaphor of the wedding of a young woman. But unlike Anowa, Mwanaheri sees the future when her husband-to-be places a ring on her finger. What she sees makes her refuse the ring and reject the proposed marriage.

The play begins with two lovers, Mwanaheri and Bukini at a secret rendezvous. Bukini is about to leave the country but wants to give Mwanaheri a ring to commit her to a marriage with him. He promises that once abroad, he will send for her after a couple of months. But as Bukini puts the ring on her finger, Mwanaheri starts to see what might lie ahead if she agrees. Except for the last scene which is the continuation of the first scene, the rest of the play shows what Mwanaheri sees as happening to herself and others during and after her wedding to Bukini.

Mwanaheri sees herself married during a big wedding conducted in a typical coastal ritual with dances, songs and lessons on how to be an

ideal wife. The wedding starts with ominous signs as well. A cold wind blows and a shadow passes while a poet singer gloomily intones the fate of a young girl who shrunk 'because even though laughter wanted her, sorrow embraced her'. In four short verses Mwanaheri's life is projected. But there is no place for such gloomy and sad thoughts in a wedding so the music takes over and the dancing commences. Present at the wedding is Bwana Mzuri (The Beautiful Man) whose money paid for the wedding festivities and dominates the wedding photographs. Present also is Kahinja, the groom's brother who does not believe in weddings and is about to leave town because he cannot stand people 'with two faces', girls with too much make-up and false hair. He will pursue fulfilment in a neighbouring country where there is a new idea for living.

When the groom leaves the day after the wedding, Mwanaheri is forced to stay with Bukini's aunt, his only elder relation. Years go by but there is no word from the groom who had promised to return 'in a year or two'. While waiting, Mwanaheri gets impregnated by one of the husband's friends, an action which brings shame and family break-up. The debts of the wedding catch up with the aunt and she is rescued at the last minute by the groom's brother who returns from an Ujamaa village just in time to save his family. The brother, Kahinja, had left Mombasa for a neighbouring country (Tanzania) where he was attracted by 'new ideas there'. On his return to the Ujamaa village he is arrested for having embezzled the village's funds entrusted to him. Through her vision in the marriage Mwanaheri sees betrayal of

her and others' expectations; the destruction of dreams by people who wear two faces of deception. Even those who chose the Ujamaa life are not spared from social and economic problems. Life after the wedding is a disappointment for Mwanaheri and when she comes out of her vision, she opts not to enter into it.

The disillusionment of Hussein's characters is achieved through a montage effect which is not insistent but very lucid. Each scene is built up to contribute to the cumulative effect and characters are captured at important moments which illuminate their subsequent downfall or disillusionment.

The characters in Arusi commit acts which then determine the progression of the events concerning them individually. These acts are a result of circumstances forced upon the characters and once the characters have committed them, they become objects rather than subjects of subsequent actions. The characters progressively become acted upon rather than act. After entering into marriage, Mwanaheri's life is shown to be messed up by circumstances rather than decisions she has taken herself. She is in a constant state of waiting. Her position is underlined by not only the absence of her groom but also by her pregnancy which is a state of waiting for new life born of circumstances outside her control. The aunt is forced to borrow money to finance the wedding. This act determines the rest of her life which progressively disintegrates into more poverty and physical disabilities. Hers is a clear situation of the relationship between those who have a form of power and those who do not, nationally and internationally.

The activities of the aunt like those of the society are controlled by those who have had the power to finance the wedding or independence. Kahinja becomes dissatisfied with the social organization and cultural values of his country. His decision to go where 'new ideas' are being experimented, however, turns sour and brings no fulfilment. Kahinja is caught between the problems of his new and old life. He is forced to use money entrusted to him by peasants of an Ujamaa village to rescue his aunt from poverty and the clutches of the loan shark.

Just as in Mashetani where laughter and the devils provide both a commentary and an element of mood for the characters and the events portrayed, Hussein uses the everpresent wedding music in the same manner. The music frames the events of the play and is a constant reminder of the milieu of the activities taking place. Sometimes it is in the background and sometimes it is brought forward by characters who either react to it or are aware of its presence. The role of this music is crystallized in Part Three scene one. This scene has an optimistic atmosphere. There is peace between Mwanaheri and the aunt. Even Ali, the man responsible for Mwanaheri's pregnancy is accommodated without the recriminations and the secrecy of the preceding scenes. Mwanaheri shows also possibilities of directing her life in a new direction. She has started a petty business of selling vitumbua*. At the end of this scene, the room which has been previously dark is opened to let in a lot of light. It is an optimistic gesture except

* vitumbua: a type of pancake made of rice flour, popular especially along the coast.

for the presence of the music. Hussein's directions instruct:

(... Mwanaheri quickly opens all the windows. Now the room is light and airy. ... From far we hear the beni music passing. Mwanaheri runs to the window. The music comes nearer; now ululations and celebratory noises can be heard. Mwanaheri looks out and she becomes tearful, she returns. She picks up the cleaning rags, puts them in a pail, wants to pick up the pail but leaves it. She huddles in a corner, tears flowing as silently an attack of hiccuping builds up. On the stage a wind blows and a shadow passes. ...)⁷¹

The music and what it symbolizes overshadows the little optimism built earlier in the scene. The sombre note at the end of the scene becomes the prelude to the last scene of the play which follows immediately after the above directions and is set like the first scene of the play with the two lovers alone. Mwanaheri has seen what it would mean if she accepted the ring:

Mwanaheri: Did you feel anything?

Bukini: No.
(Mwanaheri looks at the ring)
Why?

Mwanaheri: No.
(She removes the ring)

Bukini: Why are you taking it off?

Mwanaheri: Isn't the play over?

Bukini: A - a - a - a. Wear ...

Mwanaheri: (Gives the ring to Bukini)
I am afraid.

Bukini: What are you afraid of?
You are laughing,
What are you afraid of?

Mwanaheri: The devil of love.
(Both laugh)

Bukini: Take it.

Mwanaheri: Maybe later ...
(She leaves)

Bukini: When later?

(Silence. He is alone. Slowly he looks at the ring ...) ⁷²

For Mwanaheri, the wedding is not an attractive proposition. Bukini who has not seen Mwanaheri's vision does not understand her decision even though he was the initial catalyst of it. The relationship between Bukini and Mwanaheri as well as their role in the structure of the play is reminiscent of Mashetani's Juma and Kitaru. In both plays, the set of characters provide the element of play within a play. But whereas Juma and Kitaru are involved in the role playing scenes within their play and thus come to an equal understanding of their positions, Bukini is not a participant in Mwanaheri's life as the vision unfolds. Bukini wants to commit Mwanaheri into wedding him but has plans of not being around to face his responsibilities. What Mwanaheri sees is an event resulting from a decision of two people but only one will be present to face the consequences of that event.

The play evokes no deep emotions. There is an objective detachment which Hussein has built in for the audience which is closer to a fairy-tale type of effect rather than realistic portrayal. It is as if the writer has been exhausted by his earlier emotional insistence on the evils of neo-colonialism and is content to show the everyday effects of this evil on the lives of the majority of the people who do not think about their plight beyond their daily struggle for existence.

The big conflicts are outside the play and the small ones occur only between the people themselves and these appear almost petty when compared to the forces which affect them all. Mwanaheri's parents and the aunt of the groom quarrel because of the girl's pregnancy which brings shame but this does not bring them any awareness of the social factors which contribute to the situation. Nor does Kahinja's fight with Ali who impregnated Mwanaheri come out of a sense of social understanding but out of a personal betrayal of friendship. There are numerous characters who appear once never to be heard again. Hussein uses them as set pieces rather than active participants in the action of the play. They are neighbours, friends or villagers who comment on the major characters or provide valuable information but they are peripheral. Hussein denies his audience any kind of involvement in these characters. They are pieces in a jigsaw puzzle which makes sense only when the whole is completed. Two types of alienation have been successfully brought together: the characters from the social processes which govern their lives and the audience from the characters who appear fragmented. This together with the lack of any crisis or build to a climax makes the play create a sense of frustration for the reader or audience. No purgation of the emotions or the intellect is achieved and here lies the strength of the play. The disillusionment of the audience who feel that they have been denied something unexplainable in the theatrical experience. The fragmentation of the action of the play together with the characters is the fragmentation of the social practice of the post-independence era Hussein comments upon. He asks more

questions in this play than he attempts to answer and has stayed away from providing any kind of moral in his story telling. The fundamental question he probably asks in Arusi is this: Can a house built on a false foundation stand firmly and provide good shelter for the owners? Obviously he believes not, but even though his artistic solution of denying the construction of such a house is sound, as a social and political choice it appears idealistic and vague. Given that history has taken its course and independence has been an undeniable fact, the past can only be claimed in order to understand the present but not to go back for alternate choices. This is possible only in fairy tales where fates can be reversed and time is not a limitation on the action. Hussein, has provided us a modern day fairy tale where nobody lives happily ever after but ends up in a limbo of social frustration because the house they inhabit has been built on an anthill. In the theatre, it is possible to go back and choose a better foundation for a house, a different partner or circumstances in a wedding to cause a different reading in the crystal ball but in real life, this is not possible. This is where art and life part but art clarifies life's choices and directions.

It is probably in this that Hussein tries to make his point and makes the whole play a protest. Arusi projects a dream gone wrong. The way that a dream is actualized in a particular way makes one aware of possible alternatives of the events which structure it. The rejection of the ring at the end becomes a rejection of the way things have shaped themselves since independence or the Arusha Declaration.

With hindsight, these events have created factors which have shaped a reality which needs to be rejected. These factors have distorted dreams of equity, democracy and freedom so much so that they tend to invalidate the initial events which remain facts. The feelings aroused by the dilemmas and contradictions of independence were earlier expressed by Y.S. Chemba in his poem, 'My Newest Bride':

... Oh that I could divorce you
 But God forbid! How could I, and say so
 Oh! Uhuru my love my sweet
 You are my bane, my life
 I love and hate you
 Uhuru my love, my Freedom ... 73

While the poem shows a coming to terms with the post-independence experience, Arusi rejects it totally.

Hussein has written two more plays, Kibwisu which is yet to be published or performed and Sokomoko which was performed at the University of Dar-es-Salaam in 1981. Sokomoko takes as its theme an identity crisis brought about by people who are dissatisfied with themselves and think they can do better if they are other than themselves. By adopting alien elements, however, these people are trapped between two identities which become the cause of confusion in their lives. The chaos which results is easily exploited by others who have their own selfish motives. Here, Hussein is using a common situation in Africa where the adoption of especially Western values has brought not only an identity crisis to some, but opened doors to economic and social profiteering by others. The situation can be corrected only by reverting to the original identity and the acceptance of who one is.

In Sokomoko, Hussein goes back to the story telling technique of Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi leaving the riddle part of it out. As in Sutherland's The Marriage of Anansewa⁷⁴, Hussein uses a story teller and a chorus out of which emerge actors to play the various characters in the play. Sokomoko (Chaos) is a very short play told as a fable about an identity crisis of three animals; a frog, a chicken and a goat. Once upon a time, the story teller begins, there were these three animals who were dissatisfied with being just a frog crying krook-krook-krook; just a chicken with her cry of ku-ku-ku and just a goat always crying mee-mee. The frog wanted to become a hawk, the chicken a cat, the goat a lion. They then embark upon becoming the various other animals by imitating their voices, movements and other characteristics. A wise tortoise warns them that they are trying the impossible because they are defying the order of things but the animals don't listen because they are set on achieving their goals. The existence of a frog-hawk, a chicken-cat and a goat-lion creates great confusion as each vies for attention from the audience and competes to be better than the others. They fight amongst themselves. This state of affairs suits the hyena who hopes for the confusion to continue so that he can reap the bodies which are the aftermath of the fighting. He feeds 'the fire' to the confusion until the animals are helplessly unable to put it out and are only rescued at the last minute by a butterfly who puts out the fire. The animals chase the hyena away and happily revert back to being just a frog, a chicken and a goat.

The structure of the play is simple incorporating dance, song,

poetry, mime and scenarios. The story teller does not only narrate the story but acts as a stage manager prompting the chorus to enact several scenes. The chorus is given opportunity to improvise and engage the audience in their activities by drawing it within the action of the play. It is left to the story teller to control the activities and keep the action going. Like some traditional tales, the action of the play directs itself towards a moral using a structure which provides no justification for behaviour or action. No reason is given why the animals are dissatisfied with themselves while at the same time pointing to the disasters which can occur for adopting such an attitude. There is always somebody around who will exploit the situation when such a folly is indulged in.

Unlike his other plays, Sokomoko ends happily and Hussein leaves out any suggestions that people who have gone through the experience of the animals cannot revert back to the innocence of their former selves. This optimism is probably due to the fact that the play was written for young people and as such, the writer is concerned with providing a well rounded fable which has no ambiguities. But as Hussein himself has pointed out, 'A good fable for children is a good fable for adults'. The end of Sokomoko seems to beg some questioning. Can people who have assimilated foreign cultures revert back to the innocence of their former selves? Can the frog croak his lullaby without his voice carrying the after effects of trying to be a hawk? Is the only viable solution to the animals predicament the traditional deus ex machina in which a stranger comes out to the rescue? Are Promethean figures the

only ones capable of solving the mess society gets itself into? While the 'they lived happily ever after' ending satisfies the sensibilities of the young, their elders might feel that it is a bit contrived and quite uncharacteristic of Hussein. This is primarily because the ending denies the process of history which Hussein is always conscious of. Maybe this is intentional. Instead of accepting and finding comfort in the fable as the children are meant to do, adults are led to questioning and view the ending with unease. The fable is double edged.

This chapter has concentrated on the plays and theatrical techniques of Ebrahim Hussein. The following chapter looks at the works of Hussein's contemporaries and their contribution to the theatre experience after 1967.

Notes to Chapter 3

- 1 These are Wakati Ukuta and Alikiona. Hussein himself provided this information.
- 2 See for example T.S. Sengo's complaint about the obscurity of Mashetani in 'Ebrahim N. Hussein, Mwandishi wa Michezo ya Kuigiza' in Hisi Zetu, Z., Sengo na Kiango, eds., Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1975, p.80.
- 3 On Wole Soyinka and a critical appraisal of his works see for example: Joseph Okpaku, New African Literature and the Arts, Y. Cromwell & Third Press, New York, 1970, pp.6-26; Femi Osofisan, 'Tiger on Stage' in Ogunba and Irele, Theatre in Africa, Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1978, pp.151-175; James Gibbs, Critical Perspectives on Wole Soyinka, Heinemann, London, 1981.
- 4 From interview of Hussein with Abdilatif Abdalla, BBC London, 23/11/1984.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 See Sengo na Kiango, 1975.
- 7 Eldred Jones, 'Wole Soyinka: Critical Approaches', in E. Wright, ed., The Critical Evaluation of African Literature, Heinemann, London, 1973, p.645.
- 8 Femi Osofisan, in Ogunba and Irele, 1978, p.157.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 M. Etherton, 1982, p.292.
- 11 See the plays: Ama Ata Aidoo, Anowa, Longman, London, 1970; Femi Osofisan, The Chattering and the Song, Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, 1977.
- 12 For detailed discussion on the history of the coast see C.S. Nicholls, The Swahili Coast: politics, diplomacy and trade on the East African littoral 1798-1856, London, 1971.

- 13 John Iliffe, 1979, p.38. See also Jan Knappert, Traditional Swahili Poetry, Leiden, 1967.
- 14 A.M. Khamisi in Ruhumbika, 1974, pp.306-7.
- 15 E.N. Hussein, 'Ngoma na Vailini' in Mulika, no.2, 1970.
- 16 Interview, Hussein with Abdalla, op. cit.
- 17 See the many articles on political, economic and social issues published at the time in such publications as Maji Maji, nos.1-12, Cheche, The University Echo. All these are available at the University library, Dar-es-Salaam.
- 18 Amongst those present during this time were Lionel Cliffe, Cranford Pratt, John Saul, Issa Shivji (a student activist then) and Walter Rodney whose works on Tanzania appear in several parts of this study.
- 19 Bertolt Brecht, 'Against Georg Lukacs' in Aesthetics and Politics, London, 1980, p.82.
- 20 E.N. Hussein, 'Ngugi: Ugumu wa Ukweli Anaousema', a paper given at Usiku wa Ngugi. The event highlighted the plight of Ngugi wa Thiong'o when he was incarcerated in Kenya, Dar-es-Salaam, 30/1/1978. (unpublished)
- 21 Ibid. My translations.
- 22 E.N. Hussein, 'Wakati Ukuta' in Michezo ya Kuigiza, Nairobi, 1970, p.17.
- 23 Ibid., p.18.
- 24 See Ama Ata Aidoo, The Dilemma of a Ghost, Accra, 1965.
- 25 'Alikiona' in Michezo ya Kuigiza, pp.44-64.
- 26 Ibid., p.58.
- 27 Ibid., p.64.
- 28 The English version is used here. Kinjeketile, Dar-es-Salaam, 1970. See Figures 7 & 8.
- 29 See Ola Rotimi, Ovonramwen Nogbaisi, Ibadan, 1974.
- 30 Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Micere Githae Mugo, The Trial of Dedan Kimathi, London, 1977.

- 31 John Iliffe, 'Tanzania under German Rule' in Cliffe and Saul, 1972, p.9.
- 32 Kinjeketile, p.v.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 See Michael Etherton, The Development of African Drama, London, 1982, p.146.
- 35 See L.A. Mbughuni, 'Old and New Drama from East Africa' in African Literature Today, no.8, London, 1976, p.87.
- 36 M. Etherton, op. cit., p.164.
- 37 Kinjeketile, p.8.
- 38 Ibid., pp.15-16. See Figure 7.
- 39 Ibid., p.16.
- 40 Ibid., p.28.
- 41 Ibid., p.34.
- 42 Ibid., p.53.
- 43 See Robert F. Gray, Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa, London, 1969.
- 44 See Kinjeketile, pp.45-46.
- 45 Joachim Fieback, 'Space, Methods of Communication and Functions of Theatre in Tropical Africa', in Theatre Space, op. cit., p.88.
- 46 The new scenes were included in the production of Kinjeketile which was taken to Festac, Lagos, Nigeria, in 1977 but have not been published by the end of 1984. The scenes were available courtesy of the author.
- 47 Kinjeketile, p.29.
- 48 E.N. Hussein, Mashetani, Dar-es-Salaam, 1971.
- 49 Okot pBitek, Song of Lawino and Song of Ocol, Nairobi, 1972, p.175.
- 50 On the Zanzibar revolution see amongst others, Cranford Pratt, 1976, pp.179-182 and also Mashetani, pp.vii-viii.

- 51 See James Ngugu, The Black Hermit, Nairobi, 1972.
- 52 Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ngugi wa Mirii, I Will Marry When I Want, London, 1982, p.37.
- 53 Femi Osofisan, The Chattering and the Song, op.cit. See also Segun Oyenkule's Katakata for Suffer head discussed in M. Etherton, 1982, op.cit., pp.295-301.
- 54 Mashetani., p.1.
- 55 Ibid., p.4.
- 56 Ibid., pp.6-7.
- 57 Ibid., p.34.
- 58 Ibid., p.42.
- 59 Ibid., pp.48-49.
- 60 See Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Devil on the Cross, London, 1982.
- 61 F. Gray, op.cit., p.171.
- 62 Mashetani, p.viii.
- 63 Jogoo Kijijini, Ngao ya Jadi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1976.
- 64 Ruyendo's play The Contest is discussed in Chapter 4.
- 65 See Wole Soyinka, 'The Strong Breed' in Five Plays, London, 1964, pp.236-276.
- 66 John Keats, 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' in Miriam Allott, ed., The Poems of John Keats, London, 1970, pp.532-538.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 See S. Chiraghdin's introduction to Jogoo Kijinini, op.cit., p.8.
- 69 Ebrahim N. Hussein, Arusi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 70 See Anowa, op.cit.
- 71 Arusi, p.49.
- 72 Ibid., pp.49-50.

73 Y.S. Chemba, 'My Newest Bride' in Drumbeat, Nairobi, 1967, p.26.

74 See Efua Sutherland, The Marriage of Anansewa, London, 1975.

CHAPTER 4

LIBERATION, SOCIETY AND SOCIALISM

The current chapter is divided into several sections each grouping plays which have common thematic content and/or similar approaches to expressing issues common after 1967. Like Hussein, the authors of these plays and works have responded to the reality after Arusha by utilizing prevailing attitudes, ideas, moods and expectations of the period to create works which reflect and show a desire to act upon that reality. The themes contain within them not only the prevailing attitudes on liberation, nationalism and Ujamaa but also carry some general beliefs on social values which are both desirable and undesirable in an ideal society. While many of the plays, therefore, portray various political and economic struggles, there are a few which concern themselves with general topical issues of the time and aim at providing morals and inciting ideas on social obligations. Included also in this chapter is a discussion on improvisational plays and the verse drama form - Ngonjera. Both of these have added an important dimension to the theatre experience and practice in the period under investigation.

1. (a) Colonialism, Nationalism and Liberation

Another leading playwright in Tanzania since 1967 has been Penina Muhando/Mlama who was a fellow student of Hussein's and later a colleague at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. Like Hussein, Muhando's background is reflected in some of her plays. She draws heavily from the traditions and performances of the Wakaguru of Morogoro, a tribe of which she is a member.¹ Between 1971 and 1984, she has written seven plays, six of which have been published, devised in collaboration with others three other plays two of which are published. Many of these plays are discussed in various sections of this chapter.

Tambueni Haki Zetu² (Recognize Our Rights) was Muhando's third play. published in 1973. Like Hussein's Kinjeketile, the play takes its material from the liberation struggles of the immediate past. The writer's attitude in this play is that freedom is a right and man can use any means to attain it. Some of the means may be objectionable to others but they are justified when the object is to free oneself or one's community from political and economic oppression. It is a position which celebrates the process of liberation and at the same time gives support to those who are still struggling to liberate themselves.

The play centres around Mundewa, the protagonist, who at the beginning of the play is shown to be facing the ancestors in the spirit world. Mundewa is dead but his admittance to the spirit world is checked by the ancestors who want him to justify his actions on earth. Sekulu, the leader of this spirit world is particularly unhappy with

the actions of Mundewa and his people against a neighbouring tribe. Except for the last scene, the rest of the play shows how and why Mundewa's people acted as they did. The scenes which are presented in a flashback sequence, become Mundewa's defence against the accusation of the ancestors and underscore the right for political and social liberation. Mundewa and his people, the Watone, are shown to be justified in fighting their neighbours, the Wakusa because freedom is at the centre of their conflict. The oppression exercised by the Wakusa and their allies the Waboma has forced the Watone to pick up arms and break the ancestral treaty of friendship. In the end the Watone succeed in driving out the Wakusa and neutralizing the powers of their allies the Waboma. Through the conflicts between Watone and Wakusa, the writer justifies Mundewa's and his people's right to liberation. In the last scene of the play the writer shows why the ancestors and Mundewa don't see eye to eye and thus underlines the play's rationale:

Sekulu: ... How could you drive away the Wakusa from the country. Wakusa were invited by your own ancestors...

Mundewa: Why don't you want to recognize our rights. Rights. Only rights. Wakusa didn't want to recognize them, Waboma refused to recognize them and now you the spirits - our ancestors refuse to recognize them. (He shouts louder) We have a right to defend ourselves ...³

In spite of Mundewa's pleas and justifications, the ancestors refuse to admit Mundewa in the spirit world because according to them he has broken a moral code when he chose to fight the Wakusa. Mundewa, however, angrily forces his way through the gates of the after-life and

claims his place amongst the ancestors.

Tambueni Haki Zetu is based on actual historical conflicts between the Wakaguru and the Wakwavi who live in Morogoro Region, the ancestral home of the writer. The writer captures the antagonism between these two groups which was fuelled by the colonial intrusion and administration. These, however, have provided only the inspiration to the conflicts used in the play and the writer has used them in a very specific progression to support her political statement. There is a strong narrative approach in the development of the plot and events. As in story-telling, the events are presented from one point of view which is the Watone's. There is no actual dramatic confrontation between the groups in the conflict and throughout the play they meet only once. The structure seems to suit the purpose of the scenarios and the writer's ideological objectives. The development and resolution of the conflicts from the point of view of Mundewa and his people are in line with creating defence material for Mundewa in front of the ancestors. They also suit the writer's purpose in underlining the right of the oppressed to fight their oppressors as well as establishing the point of view of the oppressed as being the only valid one in liberation struggles.

The play links the fight for liberation to the process of communal organization and unity. The Watone form a party as a defensive action against their enemies. The members are initiated into the party through a secret ritual oath which binds the members to the party and community. The process is reminiscent of the activities of nationalist

parties which fought for independence in Africa. The creation of the party in the play, however, fulfils an ideological need rather than a social need coming out of the events of the play. The Watone seem to have been a united, communally responsible people before the birth of the party. The presence of the party does not in any way alter political or social directions of the events and participants. The importance of the party, therefore, lies in its nature as a contemporary political organization which is seen as more relevant than the traditional forms of organization. The party is a feature of modern nationalism. The party, ZETU (Ours) is a mass rather than a vanguard party and becomes the new rallying point for the political struggle. It is an ideal party which the play shows and its democratic approach makes room for opposition. But this opposition is not strong and the party is in the end embraced by the whole community including those members whose intentions are purely selfish ones. The party and its activities are made to be so paramount that personal relationships are made irrelevant. The writer, for example, introduces a relationship between two young characters in the play. The relationship has the possibility of developing into an intimate one. This relationship is made irrelevant by the petty squabbles which are given neither reasons for their existence nor follow up. The relationship peters out as if *has* the writer was not really interested in it or forgotten it in the progression of the major political events. She succeeds in dismissing personal antagonisms or love affairs as being irrelevant to the struggle at hand.

One of the unique features of Tambueni Haki Zetu is that it is one of the few Tanzanian plays which brings to focus the cosmological relationships of man and community on one hand, and the living, the dead and the spirits on the other. Man makes sense only within the community that defines him and yet his individuality stands out as a result of being a member of a community. Mbiti describes this man and community relationship as 'I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am'.⁴ This cyclical vision of life encompasses not only the living but the dead as well. Death is a period of transition where new problems of social and spiritual identity arise. One's soul seeks and undergoes adjustments in order to acquire a fitting place amongst the dead and the ancestors. Mundewa seeks admission into the hereafter and even uses force to secure a place because his alternative is to become a wandering and condemned spirit. Once admitted, the dead pass on eventually into ancestors who govern the sphere of moral obligation for the living. As Ray points out:

Ancestors act as official guardians of the social and moral order - constitute the basic categories of moral and legal thought.⁵

They are powerful and are beyond challenge from the living. The rights and duties they sanction define and control political and social human relations. Ultimately, however, they concern themselves with 'the adherence of public norms' rather than moral virtue. Mundewa's crime is in the breaking up of the political and social norms set up by the ancestors. It is irrelevant whether his actions are morally virtuous or not, he has acted contrary to the social obligations set by

those before him. His punishment is his exclusion from the cyclical order of the dead, the living and the unborn. Just as the ancestors do not force a man to accept the social and political order they are guardians of, they reward or punish and it is up to the individual to accept or refuse. Refusal, however, means alienation and at the end of Tambueni Haki Zetu, Mundewa stands alone - a fate greater than death. His action brings a disturbance in the social equilibrium and one is left with the feeling that change has come to the world of the ancestors just as it has invaded the world of the living. But Mundewa's action can also be looked at in another way. His defiance is against unreasonable tradition which is blind to historical process. When man is chained to his past which does not compromise with social development then revolt is the only way. Mundewa cuts himself and his people from the obligations of the past because these don't serve their immediate goals and when the custodians of that past are adamant not to recognize the legitimacy of Mundewa's actions, their authority must be challenged. Here is the dilemma of the modern African torn between his allegiance to the past and the realities of the present. It is the present, however, which is championed in this play. Moreover, Mundewa's double defiance - breaking the ancestral moral codes and not accepting the ancestors' verdict on his actions - gives the play a very secular view in which physical man and his actions claim primacy over any other elements in his cosmology.

Because the party is the driving force behind the Watone, Mundewa does not stand out as an individual force like Kinjeketile in the

events portrayed. Kinjeketile's decisions and indecisions were contributory factors to the momentum of the struggle. It is the party rather than Mundewa that is given the driving force behind the events in the play. So, even though Mundewa is shown as a character with courage, decisiveness and leadership qualities, he is not unique. He is an equal amongst equals. He does not possess personal charisma but is presented as spokesman for his people and their ideals. What he does could have been done by any of the other characters working alongside him. Mundewa, like the other characters in the play is distinguishable by the functions he represents rather than by any individual idiosyncratic characteristics. The characters are all part of unified entities which are either for or against the fight for liberation. The ancestors or spirits likewise are recognizable only as a group and through the cosmological function they represent. All these seem to favour the ideological framework of the play which wants to highlight social groups and struggles rather than the individual.

The performance milieu of the play exists in the songs and chants, the rituals, the contrasting setting of village life with that of the hereafter, the stylistic language of the ancestors, the traditional etiquette and codes of behaviour plus the proverbial and metaphorical elements of the language. Muhandu manages to create a society unspoiled by any alien philosophical ideas or technology. The colonial input which partly inspired the work has been transferred to a pre-capitalist struggle for independence which highlights her concern that the quest for freedom is any society's right regardless of historical and

social specificity. But the traditional elements used contrast greatly with the proscenium stage which the writer uses as performance space. The setting of the events of the play in the chosen space seems to work against some of the traditional elements used which demand a different relationship between audience and performer than that demanded by the proscenium. A more versatile space which could complement not only the traditional performance elements but also establish the links in the cosmological times used would probably be more consistent. It would also have eliminated the necessity to write some of the scenes in dialogue which seem to be more suited to a narration by a story-teller. But the preference for proscenium is understandable since the play was written and published in 1973 when the conventions of proscenium staging were dominant. Writers and composers of plays were more concerned about giving traditional flavour to the plays by incorporating dances, songs, chants, etc. They were not yet concerned about finding an alternative to the proscenium as performance space. Moreover, the content was also seen as more important, no matter what performance form it took.

Hussein's Kinjeketile and Muhando's Tambueni Haki Zetu were both based on historical events. So was Mulokozi's Mukwava wa Uhehe. M.M. Mulokozi, like Hussein and Muhando has for many years been associated with the University of Dar-es-Salaam. He has been better known for his critical essays, poetry, Ngonjera and researches in traditional oral forms such as the Enanga*. Mukwava wa Uhehe⁶ is his

* A form of epic poetry found amongst such peoples as the Bahaya.

major play which was performed several times in 1968 and 1971 then published in 1979. The play can be seen to have been produced in the same spirit which produced Kinjeketile. The liberation struggles of the past were being claimed to inform contemporary struggles as well as giving the past struggles their proper place in Tanzanian history. As such, Mukwava wa Uhehe, Tambueni Haki Zetu and Kinjeketile share elements which underline some common ideological objectives. This is especially so in Hussein's and Mulokozi's plays where the protagonists are historically better known than in Muhando's play. The real Kinjeketile and Mukwava presented the German Colonial administration with some of its fiercest opposition to its rule in the then Tanganyika. While Muhando has fictionalized the groups in conflict, both Hussein and Mulokozi have left the identity of the historical personages unfictionalized. But while Mulokozi and Hussein capture the similarities of their historical models, their plays highlight also differences which characterize each model as specific to its society.

The historical Mukwava was the chief of the Wahehe in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania. After inheriting power from his father, Mukwava continued to expand his chiefdom by conquest and annexation so that by the time the Germans arrived in 1890 'the Hehe were the dominant power in Southern Highland'.⁷ Mukwava's state has been described as containing little bureaucracy, 'few civil institutions, myths or rituals but the chief's will was the absolute authority'.⁸ In character Mukwava was described by colonialists as 'sharply intelligent, he was autocratic, unpredictable, suspicious and

cruel'.⁹ One of the greatest strengths of Mukwava's state was its military organization, a feature which gave the people an identity which successfully survived the colonial pressures and is a dominant element in Mulokozi's play. There were three reasons which made Mukwava a thorn in the side of Germany. First of all, Mukwava was contending for the same areas that the Germans wanted. Then, Mukwava refused to recognize German rule and kept the colonialists guessing as to his real motives when he negotiated with them in one moment and repulsed them in the next. Fear for his unpredictability was aggravated by his military prowess which made his state an out of bounds area for colonization. After initial military success against the Germans, Mukwava was forced to become a fugitive and finally took his own life rather than be captured by the enemy.¹⁰ Mulokozi is pretty faithful to the story of the historical Mukwava. The artistic liberties the writer takes in the handling of the plot or the main character shed no new light on the understanding of the events as already known. There is, however, a heightening of certain elements especially within the character of Mukwava which suits the writer's purpose in situating the protagonist as a nationalist whose activities were a prelude to contemporary liberation struggles.

The play Mukwava wa Uhehe chronicles events surrounding Mukwava during the last eight years of his life. The first act establishes the character of Mukwava, the social organization of his state and the events which led to his victory against the Germans at Lugalo. The second act follows Mukwava's descent into defeat and his society's

cultural disintegration. It is a period of colonial ascendancy in Uhehe. Through both acts, Mukwava is established as a hero to his people, a successful military strategist, a democrat except on the question of German colonization where his hatred and opposition to it predominates. He is a man who appoints women to high military positions but can say to his wife at the same time:

You take care of the kitchen. It seems that you do not understand politics, so don't interfere.¹¹

He is not only impatient at times but is a man of tremendous ego and pride who just before he kills himself can say:

I believe I have done my duty to my country and my people. Under my protection they cultivated their fields and harvested their crops. Milk flowed like water of Lya Mbangali and meat spread like savanna grass. I fed my people, I clothed them and gave them good shelter. Where are they now? Have they forgotten all that I have done for them? No!¹²

These are words of a man who trusts his actions and their effects as well as the loyalty of his people. Mukwava trusts the future to both vindicate him and carry on the battle he started. Earlier on, however, Mukwava seems not to have possessed this farsightedness. His defeat and his society's disintegration can partly be attributed to the fact that some people did remember Mukwava's actions too well. Mukwava has conquered many neighbouring peoples. His conquest creates awe but also fear and suspicion. When Mukwava invites his neighbours to join his campaign against the Germans, there is understandably a reluctance to do so. One neighbouring ruler tells Mukwava that his people have not healed from wounds inflicted by Mukwava's wars. Another reminds him of the chaos he has left in his country. Others fear a situation

where their own ambitions might conflict with Mukwava's. 'The shed is too small for two bulls', one of them says.¹³ They don't trust Mukwava nor do they want to gamble their security. As one of them points out:

I have already shaved off the Arab's beard. I have calmed Unyamwezi and Urambo. The seat of Milambo is now mine and his mercenaries are obeying my orders. I don't need more or less. I have no quarrel with the red European; if he does not attack me I shall not attack him; if he attacks me I will show him his grave. You are my in law, be contented with your state. I will not interfere with you and don't you interfere with me.¹⁴

Faced with such attitudes, Mukwava fails to unite his neighbours because his previous actions arouse no trust. This situation is aggravated by his failure to foresee and forestall internal conflicts amongst his own people. His determination and partly arrogance makes him assume that unity can easily be achieved in spite of longstanding rivalries between his clan and those who claim power to his position. Traitors like Mubogamasoli and Musatima arise easily in a situation where political ambitions and self interests eclipse intended communal objectives. The writer, however, uses these failures of Mukwava to achieve internal and external cohesion not as weaknesses but to underline the strength of Mukwava and his cause. Without the help of his neighbours, Mukwava achieves singular military victories. Mubogamasoli who tries to betray Mukwava to the Germans is in turn exposed by those loyal to Mukwava. The traitor who is summarily executed, does little damage to Mukwava's plans, but the event accentuates the hero's strength and the allegiance his people owe and show him. Musatima who

tries to revenge the death of Mubogamasoli by leading the Germans to Mukwava's stronghold, in the end repents and survives to bear witness to Mukwava's death. Mukwava's cause becomes the redeeming factor for even traitors like Musatima who must in the end see the necessity to resist political and cultural subjugation. The converted Musatima proclaims:

... the wish for freedom is a natural human condition
 Better freedom in poverty than slavery in plenty
 Better to die than to be a slave¹⁵

Mulokozi seems to echo sentiments found in Kinjeketile and Tambueni Haki Zetu. The writer justifies not only Mukwava's death but the deaths of all peoples in the struggle for liberation. The play applauds the choice of death rather than slavery but at the same time underlines what the writer sees as the best methods in the liberation struggle - armed struggle. Musatima points out in the play:

For freedom is not attained by mere words, by prayers,
 discourse and pleadings. Freedom is attained by the sword
and the spear, by the bullet and the gun.¹⁶ (my emphasis)

Armed struggle is made as the only feasible choice because of the nature of the conflicts which necessitates fire to be used against fire. The 'European entered this country through blood and it is through blood that he will be removed'.¹⁷ There is a sense of ritual established here where the pollution brought in by colonial violence in the country can only be cleansed by bloodshed in the liberation struggle.

Mukwava's loathing, fear and opposition to colonialism is made specific by the presence in the play of characters whose political and

economic objectives justify any people's resistance to exploitation and oppression. Mulokozi establishes a collusion between military, business and religious German concerns through several scenes in the play. They all show the Germans as greedy, arrogant and racists. Their primary goal is to exploit the native population. The Bible, the sword and the mark are to work hard to buttress German economy and thus work hand in hand. As one officer tells a missionary in one of the scenes:

You and us are one thing. You bring obedience to the soul, we do that to the body. You prepare the field and we plant the seeds. You baptize the pagan by water, we baptize them by fire. So we need you as you need us.¹⁸

The missionary, however, does not work indirectly in this attempt at economic exploitation. He actively engages his recruits in working for the Church and the Kaizer in the name of Christ without compensation. Religion becomes a ruse for economic exploitation and cultural disruption. To justify their activities, the German characters look down on the natives as less than human or at best slaves. These scenes justify Mukwava's actions to fight the Germans.

The most interesting and creatively developed character in this play is not Mukwava the hero but the narrator who unfolds his story - Mwakiyombwe. This character is the play's storyteller who puts a perspective to Mukwava's character and actions. He is the link between the events of the play and the audience. He is at the same time, however, the griot, the custodian of his people's history and Mukwava's mouthpiece. As such, he is a link between the past and

present and between Mukwava and his people. His position is justified by a common claim amongst griots and such custodians:

I talk of what I know because I witnessed them
 I talk of what I know because I was told by those who witnessed
 them
 Those who again received them from those who witnessed them
 before them¹⁹

It is through this character who is the embodiment of his people's culture that the playwright manages to symbolically and aesthetically depict the transition from the old order of Mukwava to the European cultural intrusion. Mwakiyombwe carries with him a ligumbo (a kind of harp) which he plays as he recites his narratives. When the Germans enter Uhehe, they capture Mwakiyombwe and destroy his instrument. This act shows the silencing of the griot whose function is thus rudely and brutally stopped. More important, the act represents the disintegration of a whole culture and entrance of new voices of expression. Not even Mukwava's fate and death speak so potently of the meaning of a people's destiny in the throes of cultural colonization. It is also through Mwakiyombwe that the play is redeemed from being conventional drama. He is the only character who for the most part uses declamatory language in a form of free verse. It is a form of epic poetry common amongst many tribes in the country. This together with the character's role as a story teller rescues the play from being dependent on realism which dominates the realistic dialogues and actions of the other characters.

Even though Kinjeketile and Mukwava wa Uhehe give a nationalistic perspective to struggles against colonialism, they provide different

interpretations of the forces and individuals involved. While one concentrates on the role of one man and leadership in the struggle, the other shows a whole society interacting in the struggle. Mukwava of Uhehe is about one man with his society as supporting cast. He has a goal which he pursues from beginning to end unhampered by doubts. He is a necessary component of the whole struggle. Kinjeketile, however, rises at a needed time in a people's struggle, serves his purpose and the struggle catches its own momentum with or without Kinjeketile. The man is complex driven by political objectives but aware of problems and contradictions. In Kinjeketile and Mukwava two processes of the struggle are shown: one in which the people commit themselves to a particular leader who spearheads the fight and the other in which the people take the leadership in their own hands. While Kinjeketile succeeds in forging unity of the many societies in the south east of the country, Mukwava fails to do the same in the Southern Highlands. The different approaches to the struggle and the effect they have on the surrounding peoples can be attributed not only to the characters of the leaders but also to the political organization of the societies themselves. Mukwava was a ruler and therefore his political ambitions worked against uniting people inside and outside Uhehe. Kinjeketile's motives were seen as simpler with no political ambitions to power. Moreover, Uhehe had an organized political structure which defined Mukwava's role. The people in the south east have been called stateless, with no strong centralized political leadership. The societies were fragmented with small communal entities. The leaders of these

areas posed no political threat to each other and of course they were united in similar religious beliefs. The course of Tanganyika's history might have been altered if Kinjeketile had possessed the military strategy of Mukwava or Mukwava the uniting powers of Kinjeketile. The two plays capture and reflect these organizational structures of the societies which have given the plays their inspiration. The contrasts in character and strategy of the protagonists highlight rather than understate the problems of liberation struggles as a whole. In each one, the desire to be free is not enough.

There is one major similarity in the protagonists' pursuit for liberation in Kinjeketile, Tambueni Haki Zetu and Mukwava wa Uhehe. The protagonists are shown to be in search of order either socially or cosmologically. None of them, however, achieves it at the end of their lives. Mukwava, Kinjeketile and Mundewa attain no cosmic equilibrium or an attunement with the universe either personally or within the societies they function in. In pursuing to establish political or spiritual order, the characters unleash elements of disorder which continue after their deaths. In each, the conflict between order and disorder is specific. At the beginning of the play, Kinjeketile is shown to possess spiritual order while his society is in turmoil of social and political disorder. At the end of the play, Kinjeketile is plagued by spiritual disorder as well as the heightened social disorder of his society. Mukwava descends from individual and socio-political order into political and cultural disequilibrium. He fails to re-establish the old order or find a different one. Mundewa

succeeds in instituting political order for his society but in so doing creates his own and his people's cosmological disorder. The spiritual peace he expects is denied him because he has unleashed moral disorder in his ancestors' cosmology. This progression from order to disorder or disorder to greater disorder is in line with one attitude which informs the plays. First of all, the events chronicled in the plays are seen as not sufficient unto themselves. The protagonists' actions are part of a larger search for order which will be carried on by others. The failure of Kinjeketile, Mundewa and Mukwava to arrive at a spiritual or social equilibrium is made to be not the end but the beginning of other struggles for order. Moreover, in the case of Kinjeketile and Mukwava, their pursuit of liberation or social order, contains factors which make the attainment of the goal difficult.

The use of historical liberation struggles to inform contemporary ones has revealed that certain historical models are more favoured than others. Kinjeketile, Mukwava and the struggles they engaged in is a case in point. The story of the historical Mukwava, for example, has inspired more plays since 1967 than Kinjeketile. The major reason for this can be attributed to the type of liberation struggle each led. While both were armed struggles for liberation, Kinjeketile's was more complex because of the mystifying elements of religion and spiritual beliefs. Mukwava's was a straight forward military-based armed struggle devoid of spiritual complications. This difference can also be seen in the attitudes shown the historical figures and their movements. Early commentators saw Kinjeketile as leading a movement of

'sorcerers' who used witchcraft to influence the natives. They saw the Maji Maji movement as 'a revival of a cult of the snake-god Kolelo among the Wazaramo and Waluguru'. These attitudes obscured the political objectives of the movement. Most of the information on the movement, therefore, remained within the oral history of the people involved. It was not until the mid-sixties that historians with nationalistic intentions became more interested in Maji Maji and tried to look at it as a political movement.²⁰ Mukwava's fate was different. He was understood from the beginning as a political figure who fought for political reasons. The Germans wrote extensively on him and even though contemporary historians have had to re-interpret the earlier information, Mukwava has long been established in Tanzania's political history. This has meant two things for the theatre. There has been more accessible material on the historical Mukwava. More importantly, however, Mukwava's struggle has been seen to be in line with contemporary attitudes of secular armed struggles. Mukwava represents clear political objectives pursued in acceptable armed combat. Kinjeketile needs more analysis and understanding of his complex character and the elements which informed his struggle. The popularity of Mukwava in the theatre is the result of these factors. As such, his attraction is not due to aesthetic possibilities he represents as a character but social and political ones. As characters, Kinjeketile presents more aesthetic challenges than Mukwava, challenges that only Hussein has tried to meet so far.

The use of liberation struggles of the past as source material for

plays can also be found in Edwin Semzaba's Tendehogo.²¹ The play was first performed in 1975 and was published in 1980. The play takes its thematic content from experiences during slavery. It portrays the dehumanizing nature of slavery and the successful attempts of slaves to liberate themselves. The plot follows the activities of a slave caravan from the hinterland to the coast. The caravan is led by an Arab slaver who tortures and dehumanizes the slaves. Harun, the Arab, spends a lot of time trying to deculturize the slaves by teaching them elements of Arabic and Islamic culture. He even gives them new Islamic names. Harun is assisted by a 'converted' slave who proves equal to his master in being brutal. When Harun leaves the caravan in the hands of his assistant, the slaves successfully free themselves with the help of a girl slave who tricks the assistant into forgetting himself. The two slavers are killed and the slaves end their oppression.

Like the three plays discussed above, Tendehogo establishes the justification for a people's right to liberation. But Tendehogo has two major elements which are not to be found in the other three. First of all, the play displays a closed structure where the established conflicts are completely solved within the play. It concentrates on the immediate social and cultural conflicts rather than point to wider political and economic elements. The link between the struggle of slaves to free themselves and other liberation struggles is, therefore, less direct than in the other plays. The second major difference is the style of the play. Tendehogo uses comedy as a major element of its form. The comedic elements used undercut the seriousness of the

theme and emphasize the idiosyncratic behaviour of the groups in conflict. Word play and exaggeration are the major comedic elements used and these create a lighthearted atmosphere which permeates the whole play. Characters and situations are portrayed to highlight their comedic values more than underscore the underlying motives. The character of Harun, the Arab slaver, is a good example. He is brutal and selfish but these elements are overshadowed by his colourful language, exaggerated mannerisms and funny attempts at converting the slaves into his culture. Semzaba makes a lot of use of his character's misuse of Kiswahili words and pronunciations to create many comic moments. There is also much bantering between the slaves and Harun which highlight linguistic jokes. The oppression of the slaves is therefore eclipsed by their naivety and their bunglings. In this, the play has much in common with the improvised comedy sketches and plays known as Vichékesho and discussed later in this study. It shares with Vichekesho in its uncomplicated structure and language as well as in its emphasis on comedy. These and the fact that the play celebrates the defeat of one kind of oppression - slavery - are factors which lie behind the play's popularity. It has regularly been performed by theatre groups as well as schools all over the country. Together with three other plays, Tendehogo was made part of the secondary school curriculum of Kiswahili drama for 1983-85 period. As a piece of drama, teachers have found the play more accessible to them and the students than some of the plays chosen by the Ministry of Education in recent years (e.g. Mashetani). In spite of this popularity, the play has



Figure 9: Tendehogo, UDSM, 1974.



Figure 10: John Ruganda's The Burdens, Paukwa TG, DSM, 1979.

also met with some criticisms. One such criticism has come from Penina Mlama who has pointed out, 'slavery does concern Tanzania, but what is its importance to contemporary Tanzania?'²² For Mlama and others, the objections to Tendehogo have been its failure to link the historical event of slavery to contemporary forms of oppression or struggles they engender. Such a link would enable 'Tanzanians to learn from Arab slavery and enable them to confront their present time slavery'.²³ These criticisms seem to point to the approach given the theme rather than the choice of the subject matter. The treatment of slavery without a larger political and economic framework or its emphasis on comedy rather than pedagogy seem to go against some accepted attitudes in the theatre especially during the period under discussion and more so amongst theatre practitioners who are also academicians. A play which aims at provoking laughter more than didacticism has always been received with suspicion. In spite of its critics, however, Tendehogo has become one of the most popularly known plays produced in the seventies.

While such plays as Tendehogo, Kinjeketile, Mukwava wa Uhehe and Tambueni Haki Zetu took material from the immediate past, there were others which were created by mixing real events of the past and imaginary ones or creating purely imagined events. There were also plays based on more contemporary events especially those relating to liberation struggles in Southern Africa, in such countries as Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In these groups can be found such plays as Dira ya Shujaa (The Hero's Compass) by D.H. Mgange, published in 1977,

E. Mbogo's Tone la Mwisho (The Last Drop) published in 1981 and The Vulture which was performed in 1969.²⁴ This last play was Herbert Shore's adaptation of a play by E. Schwartz originally titled The Dragon. The play carries a strong romantic current. A maiden is rescued by a hero from the clutches of an evil man, the oppressive dragon or vulture. This was adapted into a fable which carried political objectives to lend optimistic support to liberation struggles everywhere. Hussein has explained why the fable of The Vulture was able to be transformed into a performance aimed at political objectives:

Fables ... have a characterizing feature. That is, through poetry and fantasy, they tend to romanticise the strength of 'good' people in the name of love and humanism. The love that is here portrayed is to be seen as love that goes on beyond 'prosaic' everyday relationship.²⁵

The characters and the events were then presented as symbolic representations of a liberation struggle. The tackling of oppression through armed combat became the most important aspect of the play. The play was turned into an immediate statement to support the armed struggle of the liberation groups who were based in Dar-es-Salaam at the time. (i.e. from Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, South Africa and Zimbabwe). It was received as a piece of 'revolutionary theatre' and the performers were acclaimed for their 'fine acting' which made the political objectives of the play clear.²⁶

Dira ya Shujaa has the distinction of being the longest Tanzanian play published in the period 1967-84. It is a play which chronicles the colonial experience of one community and the successful liberation struggle of the people involved. The events are a mixture of

historical happenings and imaginary ones strung together to create situations which are typical in the African experience. Colonial oppression and exploitation are portrayed through forced labour, physical hardships of the native population and the colonial tax system which creates resentment and loathing for colonialism. Political awareness grows slowly but eventually the people organize themselves in a resistance movement. In spite of brutal actions from the colonial administration and the underminings of its native stooges, independence is achieved. The play portrays these events in a very slow pace which gives each situation detailed accounts of the factors involved. There are, however, two distinctive features which separate this play from the others which have dealt with the theme of liberation from colonial oppression. First of all, the attainment of independence at the end of the play is made synonymous with establishing a socialist state. In the last scene of the play, the people are celebrating the fifth anniversary of their independence. High amongst the list of achievements and 'fruits of independence' items is the establishment of socialist structures especially at the grassroot levels. Ujamaa villages and collective labour have become important features of the post-independence social organization. These successes of a socialist state are the successes of independence since they come into being simultaneously in the play. This factor makes the play stand as a bridge between those plays which have dealt with liberation from colonialism on one hand, and those which have looked at socialism as a result of the neo-colonial experience, on the other. The second group

of plays usually start where the first have left off. Dira ya Shujaa tries to merge the concerns of both groups.

The second distinctive feature of the play is its inclusion of the whole question of African Unity as an important issue. The issue is handled almost in the same manner that it was dealt with in reality. One of the major concerns of Nyerere dating back to pre-independence period has been the realization of a united Africa as a political and economic entity. Just prior to Tanzania's independence, he tried to pressure the other East African leaders (M. Obote of Uganda and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya) into organizing a form of East African federation which he saw as a good beginning towards African unity. The dream never materialised but has nevertheless continued to be a major concern of his.²⁷ Mgangeuses the dream as both a comment on the issue and its expression. While fighting the colonialist, Shija, one of the people's leaders has a dream. In the dream, independence brings with it a federation made up of neighbouring countries. There is great optimism of bringing in more countries into the federation which aims for the whole continent. These events, however, remain a dream and at independence, the idea of a united Africa gets a very small mention while the post-independence period is pre-occupied with building the nation state. The play does not provide reasons for the failure to realize the dream but highlights it as a lost noble item of the contemporary African experience.

A contemporary armed struggle is the focus of E. Mbogo's Tone la Mwisho (The Last Drop). The setting is the battlefield where the

Zimbabwe nationalists through the ZIPA freedom fighters are fighting Ian Smith's army in the forests of Zimbabwe. The play portrays the activities of one group of the freedom fighters who are part of a liberation struggle precipitated by Ian Smith's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965 and the banning of the nationalist movements and their leaders. (The real armed struggle was fought by the armed wings of these movements such as ZIPA of ZANU and ZAPU* until a political settlement known as the Lancaster House Agreement was reached and made Zimbabwe independent in 1980.) The activities of the liberation fighters and their attitudes towards liberation in the play are summarized by Tongogara, the leader of the fighters. (There was a real Tongogara who dismantled ZIPA and reorganized ZANLA. He died shortly after Zimbabwe gained independence.)

Tongogara: The ZIPA army will fight to the last drop of blood, until true independence for the people of Zimbabwe is attained. We must continue to kill and also we must continue to be killed for the honour and integrity of the African. For in this world there are two types of deaths: the death of a slave and the death of a free man.²⁹

The freedom fighters are therefore portrayed as people who have chosen to die on the battlefield because only free men have the luxury of dying in bed. The play celebrates the heroic deeds of these fighters who are shown to be faced with a formidable adversary who has to be fought under difficult conditions. Mbogo makes a special point in

* ZAPU = Zimbabwe National People's Union led by Joshua Nkomo
 ZANU = Zimbabwe African National Union led by Robert Mugabe
 ZIPA = Zimbabwe People's Army, the fighting wing of ZANU and ZAPU from 1975-1976
 ZANLA = Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army, the fighting wing of ZANU

highlighting the courage and discipline of the women fighters. One central character of the play is a woman fighter who endures much torture from the Smith army and becomes the rallying symbol for nationalist behaviour and courage for the other fighters. Mbogo makes the freedom fighters' success in eliminating their enemies inevitable. The soldiers in the Smith army are shown to be all mercenaries. The leader of this group is a man who is motivated by money and the fight in hand is a means of earning it. He boasts of his mercenary activities in other struggles such as in Angola, Mozambique, Zaire and Guinea-Bissau. He has neither emotional nor idealistic commitment to his work. The Africans working with him are confused and they too are mercenaries with selfish intentions. The whole group is shown to be without morality or human values. These characteristics are no doubt used to underscore the freedom fighters' moral and ideological superiority as well as their inevitable victory against such enemies.

While all the characters in Tone la Mwisho are unambiguous in terms of what side of the conflict they are on, there is one character who is presented as one caught in a dilemma. This is the character of the priest who is rejected by both groups in the conflict. The white mercenary, Snow, regards the Padri (priest) as a traitor to the white Rhodesian cause. The Padri is apprehended by the Smith army because of his activities in aiding the freedom fighters. His execution by Snow is interrupted by the freedom fighters who accuse him of his activities of the past. As a missionary who in the past allied himself with the colonial administration, he is regarded as an enemy.

His current change of heart to ally himself with nationalist aspirations is rejected as not enough to erase the role he played in the past. Although the fighters don't kill him, he is forced to donate blood to save one of the fighters. This action seems ambiguous in the play especially if it is meant to be symbolic. It makes sense only when it is meant to make the priest live up to his own preachings, 'let one die to save the many' in the manner of Christ - a fate which the priest meets immediately after in the hands of Snow. In the character and fate of the priest, Mbogo has tried to point to how historical factors have determined alliances. A man is friend or foe because of his alliances in the past as well as how he fits in the immediate political objectives. The rejection of the priest by both groups in the play can also be seen as a rejection of religion. On one hand religion is rejected because of its part in mystifying colonialism and on the other hand, because of its attempt at establishing a moral code which suits no-one except itself. Each group concerned seems to have no use for it.

(b) Liberation and Neo-Colonialism

Just as situations within a colonial setting have provided much material for plays after 1967, the experiences after independence have done just the same. The post independence period has been seen as a period in which neo-colonialism has developed and entrenched itself. As a result new forms of struggles for political and economic liberation have been seen as a necessity. Hussein's Mashetani, Arusi,

and to some extent Jogoo Kijijini, belong to this group. Other works which display similar attitudes are Dunia Iliyofarakana (The World in Conflict) by D.E. Hauli published in 1968, W.T. Kisanji's Pinzani published in 1976 and Malingumu Rutashobya's Nuru Mpya (New Dawn) of 1980.³⁰ While these plays portray the post independence period differently, there is a similarity of approach between Nuru Mpya and Dunia Iliyofarakana which is not shared by Pinzani. The two plays share a perspective which attributes the problems of the post independence era to a national leadership that is corrupt and oppressive. They both advocate the removal of the leadership as the only solution to the problems. The conflicts which are developed in the plays are between the few at the top and the many at the bottom whose struggle for liberation continues in spite of independence.

In Dunia Iliyofarakana, Njovelu, the Prime Minister and his cabinet are enjoying the fruits of independence denied the masses of their people. They use their positions to accumulate big cars, clothes, houses and those luxuries which set them apart from the people. As the leaders continue to grab at material things, the people are toiling hard to support a system which cares little for their welfare. In one scene Hauli demonstrates what has come to be known as the culture of 'Wabenzi' - leaders pre-occupied with possessions or those too concerned with their Mercedes-Benzes. Njovelu is talking to one of his ministers:

Bwekula: So, is the car functioning alright?

Njovelu: Very well, ha! ha! ha! No problem Mr Bwekula.

You know I don't want that Benz; I think I should manage to get a Rolls-Royce very soon. Ha! ha! ha!

Bwekula: That's very smart your excellency. A leader of a country must be a little different, you know, ha! ha! ha! These days even commoners have Benzes...³¹

If this conversation which leads to other talks about imported clothes and luxuries seems trivial, the development plans of the leaders are even worse. The plans reveal their self-centred approach which lacks any practicality. Development for them means building monuments to satisfy their egos and sustaining their life styles:

Njovelu: ... We plan to build modern buildings to house the Party and Government headquarters; and there will be built in each region and district monuments to commemorate our independence.

Bwekula: ... there will be a big statue of you. This will show visitors that the country is now ours.³²

Njovelu plans also to electrify his town and provide his officials with new cars and various other benefits because as he says, 'this is our government'. This culture of consumption is greatly contrasted with the life of the people which has not been changed by independence. The people's attitude to their fate is summarized by one peasant in the play:

Whatever I have comes from my hoe. Before independence I was just as I am now. Independence came and found me thus. Today I am told the government is mine, is that the truth?...³³

The conflict between the culture of the hoe and the culture of Wabenzi comes to a head when the military takes over assisted by peasants and other sympathizers. Even though Hauli presents the coup d'état as a necessary immediate solution to stop neo-colonial exploitation and oppression, he nevertheless is sceptical about this new revolution.

When the new leader of the coup d'état speaks to the nation the first time, Hauli makes his speech hollow and unconvincing. The speech is an echo of earlier independence speeches which the people have heard too often. The same promises and the same contradictions are repeated:

Lodi: ... the government now is under the army ... citizens, this is now your government ... The revolution which you have waited for so long is now here. So countrymen, from now on there will be no exploitation or oppression by a few people. Fear, bribery and tribalism have now disappeared.³⁴

But the government is not the people's since few of them have been involved in the process of the revolution. This revolutionary rhetoric assumes that the mere wishing away of oppression and exploitation brings about their eradication. There seems to be little difference between this revolution and the attainment of independence. The society seems to have gone a full circle. The peasants in the play are aware of what is happening. One peasant who has been an observer of the proceedings concludes after hearing Lodi speak that the struggle continues in spite of the revolution. 'It will take many years and many lessons before man is complete, before he can live in happiness, peace, harmony and love.'³⁵ The peasant then withdraws and goes back to his hoe and the old life. The struggle for him continues.

When this play appeared in 1968, its form displayed a structure which would become popular later on. The play is developed through a form which shies away from the known drawing room aesthetics. As Hussein has pointed out: 'The events find their causality in a fable that is conditioned by historical events and not by bourgeois aesthetic principles'.³⁶ This structure of the play seems to be at odds with

the characterization and the portrayal of the theme as historical factors. The characters and the thematic content are handled in a simplistic manner which robs them of their complexity as historical manifestations. This is probably what Hussein had in mind when he said that the play lacked the 'artistic power of conviction and depth of the thematic'.³⁷ The criticism is the result of how dramatic tensions in the play are diffused by avoiding confrontations and explaining away the conflicts. The characters are also too predictable and two dimensional. But all these elements are used in the play which contribute towards or against its dynamism as a theatre event, and have to be understood within prevailing attitudes of the time and the play's success at arriving at its given objective. The pre-occupation of writers at the end of the sixties was 'what' to say using the theatre and not 'how' to say it. The writer was therefore characteristically more concerned in portraying the conflicts of neo-colonialism in a straightforward manner so that there would be no confusion as to who were the politically good and bad guys.

The attitude which advocates a change of leadership as a solution for neo-colonial oppression and exploitation is repeated in such other plays as Bwana Mkubwa (The Boss) by J.P. Mbonde (1976)³⁸ and Rutashobya's Nuru Mpya. Unlike the others, Bwana Mkubwa advocates a peaceful solution in which pressure is exerted on the corrupt and oppressive leadership until it resigns. In Nuru Mpya, however, the force for change is given to the young people of society through armed struggle. In this and in the setting of its events the play displays

some features not found in the other three plays. The play was written in the late seventies and published in 1980 and as such contains elements which reflect not only the neo-colonial experience generally but also the post Arusha reality in some respects. The play can be seen as part reflection and part criticism of both experiences.

Nuru Mpya is set within a traditional society. At the beginning of the play, the society is celebrating its independence from a neighbouring colonizing people. The joys of independence, however, are short lived. The leaders turn out to be greedy and oblivious to their exploitative practices. Drawing their power from traditional links rather than popular support from the masses, the leaders pursue feudal economic practices which exploit the workers who are all young. When the land which supports their livelihood becomes too small and too poor, a move to new lands is suggested and enthusiastically carried out. But the move turns out to be a cosmetic gesture and the workers' position gets worse instead of better. The situation gets so bad that the youth-workers flee to the forest to embark on a war of liberation against the ruling elders. The play ends as drums and war songs from the forest accompany the last line of the play, 'The new generation will be free'.

The theme of the play is summarized through the use of contrast in the first part of the play and one strong image at the beginning of the second part. Contrast appears especially in the setting of the scenes. The first scene which is a celebratory one shows all the people celebrating and is followed by the second scene showing the tired young

workers meeting in a foundry. The third scene is set at the chief's residence where the elders are lazily talking and drinking. The strongest image of the play appears in scene four where the whole community is in the process of moving. The elders demand to be carried on the backs of the young workers from the old to the new land. Their various wives and possessions have to be carried as well. This image is an analogy of the neo-colonial situation in which the oppressed many have had to carry the privileged few on their backs, economically speaking. But the move can also be seen as representing the various superficial political and economic changes instituted by national governments. Part of the failure of these changes has been the presence of elements carried over from the old to the new systems. In this, one is reminded of such moves as the Arusha Declaration and the reality it has engendered. It is a reminder which comes indirectly rather than directly in the play.

As in Dunia Iliyofarakana and Bwana Mkubwa the artistic considerations of Nuru Mpya are secondary to its ideological objectives. The portrayal of class divisions in the society and how one class oppresses another is the fundamental objective. The characters are therefore drawn to fulfill this aim. The values and behaviour given to each individual character are signs which make him a member of one class or the other. There is no character who is ambiguous. Even the minor characters are painted this way. The three soldiers in the employ of Chief Huta, for example, make a brief appearance in the play. But their brutality in the form of rape, beatings and torture

identify them as belonging to the oppressor group. They are henchmen and they are the manifestations of brute force of the ruling group. In order to give clarity to all these elements, the play progresses very slowly as each scene is given considerable time to discuss the issues at hand. Since none of the characters develops in terms of changes in attitudes or class positions, the movement of the play is dependent upon the episodes. Rutashobya does not show consistency in showing how the episodes develop. Sometimes an episode is the direct result of the one preceding it while at other times an episode is given a historical causality which is independent of the preceding ones. This inconsistency is, in a way, part of the process of selecting which episodes are relevant to the ideological objectives and the causality of the episodes is not of primary issue.

The conflicts after independence have also been explored in a play by W.T. Kisanji called Pinzani (Conflicts). The play is interesting on two levels. First of all it situates the post-independence experience within a workers' struggle; secondly, its focus is on not only the leaders of the independence struggle but on the contradictions and conflicts amongst the participants brought about by the process of consolidating independence. Pinzani portrays a liberation struggle which goes wrong because of lack of planning and foresight. A capitalist company has a black manager who exploits and oppresses the workers brutally. One day, spontaneously, the workers disarm the soldiers who guard the factory, overthrow the management and take over its administration. With this, however, the workers' problems grow

instead of abating. They are forced to continue fighting because their enemies don't leave them in peace. The work in the factory stops as the fighting picks up momentum and many workers lose their lives. As the fighting continues, the workers are divided and some don't know why they are fighting. Kisanji seems to emphasize that the workers' problem is not only lack of political consciousness which they need to sustain them through their struggle but the conditions of their oppression make them unprepared for the tasks of the revolution:

The worker who under the chains of capitalism and feudalism and the powers of imperialism is so oppressed and his life continually sinks so low until finally he is destroyed can at the spur of the moment use quick tactics to effect a revolution. But he does this without the patience of planning, discipline or thought out methods - activities which are the real tactics of revolution.³⁹

It is unclear in the play whether the writer vindicates the workers from the chaos which is a result of their unpreparedness for the revolution. What is clear is how chaos can take over and detract from the process of liberation itself. In this, the writer has no doubt been informed by the general neo-colonial experience. He has also, however, been informed by the events surrounding the workers' struggles in the early seventies. In the wake of Mwongozo of 1971, the workers' struggle to gain control of their work places as well as exercise power in matters concerning their lives was short lived. The momentum of the movement was quickly checked by factors within and outside the workers' groups.⁴⁰ Some of the events which occurred then are not far from those depicted in Pinzani.

There are some interesting images in this play which support the

thematic progression. In scene one of the play, for example, the master-servant relationship is established through some simple devices. The worker is established as speechless and tongue tied while the manager has the upper hand and harangues him. This is not only because the worker is awkward but also because he is too tired to speak. His position is characterized by the heavy push cart which becomes his burden and a symbol of his oppression. He and the other workers want an end of oppression but they are divided in their attitude as to how to go about it. When the manager appears the workers lose their former courage and cow in front of him. After one of them disarms a soldier, the rest spontaneously join the revolution. In a simple way, Kisanji establishes the complexity that goes into making a revolution in spite of the will which all have in wanting it. Kisanji's achievement, however, has been in creating a character who is his spokesman for his intentions. Bavubavu is a character not involved in the struggle but provides objective comments on the activities and participants involved. He is a drunkard but argues with a clear vision of what is happening. He is to some extent a forerunner of characters which Penina Muhando would successfully use in her later plays especially in Lina Ubani and Nguzo Mama discussed later in this chapter. Throughout the play, Bavubavu has one activity which preoccupies him. At the beginning of the play the character wants and is looking for a shoe. By the end of the play, his search continues because he has not found it. This character plot underlines the major thematic plot of a liberation which is still too elusive. Even though the metaphors are

too tentative, their use makes this play more imaginative than most of a similar thematic concern.

2. Liberation, Neo-colonialism and Social Aspirations

The experiences of the post-independence era are also reflected in those plays which have taken as their theme the problems and struggles of individuals who must come to terms with contemporary reality. In these plays, the conflicts between the rulers and the ruled are of secondary importance or tackled indirectly. Instead, the plays take one of three approaches to show (a) the problems of the individual due to conflict of values; (b) the conflict between individual aspirations and the social system; (c) the oppression of individuals and groups in everyday social interaction. These plays aim at either providing a moral and a warning or advocating the liberation of the individuals concerned from undesirable values. The themes and the form they take reflect attitudes which can be linked to the Arusha Declaration and the social ideas it either strengthened or gave birth to. This is shown in the plays through their selection of values they support and practices they discourage. In this group, therefore, can be found plays which condemn values and practices which are a result of colonial and neo-colonial attitudes and aspirations; plays which condemn individualism and the practices of one group which retard the development of another; plays which advocate individual liberation from cultural alienation; and plays exposing problems of everyday living, which are most often topical.

The problems of cultural alienation is the theme of G. UHINGA's Martin Kayamba which appeared in 1968.⁴¹ Unlike the other play of the writer Rejalla which also appeared in the late sixties⁴², Martin Kayamba is based on a historical figure. The real Martin Kayamba was born in 1891 and died in 1937. Amongst his many activities he founded the Tanganyika Territory African Civil Service Association, the forerunner to the Tanganyika African Association which led to the founding of Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).⁴³ In spite of his link to the nationalist movement, he was described thus by one newspaper: 'Martin Kayamba will be remembered as the selfish African who rose to the highest rank ... without being of any use to his race'.⁴⁴ This comment was the result of Kayamba's belief that political development could be achieved only through self-improvement. It is the selfishness and short-sightedness of his individualism, however, which UHINGA tries to portray in his play. UHINGA shows Kayamba as a man who has acquired a European education and returns home full of self importance and a stranger to his people. He not only repudiates and insults his family and their traditional way of life but sets everything European as superior. He is crude and insensitive. He refuses to eat or sleep in his family home because there are no European facilities. He abandons the girl he had previously promised to marry because she speaks no English. His behaviour infuriates everyone including his father who has to be restrained from beating him. In the end, however, Kayamba sees how wrong his behaviour has been and repents. The writer blames education as the source of Kayamba's colonial values.

He sums this up through Kayamba who laments at the end:

... education has corrupted me so much that I can disregard my kin. Oh truly, that is the devastating effects of education.⁴⁵

UHINGA concentrates on presenting a character who is ridiculous. The audience is invited to laugh and ridicule this character who has exaggerated mannerisms in attitude, behaviour and speech. In this, the play has much in common with Vichekesho in using comedic elements. The play shows a man whose identity is in confusion and at the same time re-affirms traditional values and social responsibility through the rejection of Kayamba's acquired Europeaness. Kayamba's conversion, however, is not dramatically convincing. It happens suddenly with no particular reasons why it occurs then and not earlier. This can be attributed to the playwright's intentions. The structure of the play reveals that the writer is not interested in showing the progression of actions and characters. But rather he wants to say that Kayamba behaves this way and he should not. The emphasis is therefore not on character and plot development but on the comment and the moral behind it.

The problems of neo-colonial values and attitudes are also the subject of Penina Muhando's Pambo (Ornament)⁴⁶ but the play's approach to the theme and its structure is quite different from Martin Kayamba.

Pambo, published in 1975 but performed earlier, concerns itself with the expectations of education and how they affect the individual and through him the society. Pambo, the main character is a University graduate who has failed to achieve a social and economic position

expected of him. The cars, good housing, money and all the material things which a University degree is supposed to bring with it have eluded him. He thinks and broods over them constantly until he is finally possessed by them and goes mad. In his madness, he believes that he has all the things he does not have and sings his own praises of an important wealthy man. He takes refuge in the jungle where he lives half-man half-beast. Along with him come two young boys whom he has infected with his madness, and they act as his echo and chorus in his wanderings. When their parents learn about this, a long chase ensues to capture them and bring them to sanity - an act that succeeds with the help of a medicine man.

Pambo's pressure for his failure comes both from within himself and from those around him. At the beginning of the play Pambo is shown to be looking intensely at his university certificate and graduation gown. He calls them cynically 'his friends' who have given him everything; a big salary, a beautiful car, a house with good furniture and popularity amongst those who know him. But this is in contradiction with his real life situation which is shown through his poor surroundings and the words of other characters. Earlier one of his girl friends calls him a liar, a pretender who probably faked a university degree otherwise how come he is so poor and 'a parasite' to his friends! Psychologically, Pambo rejects his reality and becomes possessed by his inner self which identifies itself with wealth and power. These become a kind of 'mashetani' (devils) who take over and make him behave irrationally. But this kind of possession is

infectious and other people catch, to a lesser degree, Pambo's madness.

Muhando uses dance and song throughout this play. Pambo dances and sings from the beginning of his madness to the end and the more the madness grows, the more frantic the singing and the dancing. Both are used to show inner character tension as well as express the action at each particular moment. To induce the two young boys, Pambo uses dance and song until the boys are possessed as he is after which they run away into the bush where they sing and dance throughout their wanderings. In the end it is through the song and dance that their sanity is restored. Muhando, here follows the traditional pattern of the nature of possession with one exception. Whereas, possession usually occurs to a man whether he likes it or not, Pambo's is self imposed and brought about through his own conscious actions. But once possessed he cannot get rid of his own 'mashetani' without help. Not only does he need an expert exorcist but also the participation of others in society to join in the exorcism dance. A medicine man is called upon but this is a man who uses psychology and understanding rather than other traditional methods. The road to a cure starts with the unpossessed joining in the song and dance of the possessed. The need for the sane part of society to understand the evils around them is very clearly developed here. Next follows the need to offset the mental and psychological contents of the possessed which is accomplished by giving counter arguments to Pambo's praises of himself. As Pambo sings about his achievements in education, in material wealth and power, a counter song is asking how he managed to get an education while

others missed, how others are starving and exploited, how he has neglected his responsibilities given to him by the people. In the end when Pambo wakes up, purged of his madness, he joins the community in ridiculing his former beliefs held while mad.

In Pambo, Muhando has moved further away from the realistic conventions of her earlier plays (e.g. Heshima Yangu) by consciously using devices in the structure which extend the play beyond the dramatic framework. Besides the extensive use of song and dance, there is a voice which interrupts the action in several places to make a comment on Pambo's mental state. It keeps reminding the spectator that what is going on is 'Madness .. Madness .. madness. Not violent madness to cause harm but mental madness'.⁴⁷ This voice together with the mad songs and dance gives the play an eerie feeling of unreality. The action is also extended to the audience who are invited to join in the song of Pambo's exorcism. Life and the stage meet and the writer seems to throw the problem on the laps of the audience and challenges them to do something about it. If the kinds of evils brought about by unrealistic aspirations and greed are to be done away with, the action will need to come from the community as a whole. Muhando poses the problem as a moral struggle between good and the forces of regeneration and health on one hand, and evil and the forces of degeneration and corruption on the other. It is not what Pambo does which results in his madness and cure but his moral aptitude in each case. He does not oppress or exploit anyone but aspires to be one of that class which is morally evil. The moral thread in the play is strengthened through

the typification of certain symbols. For example, certain names of the characters carry a moral representation. Pambo means that which decorates, an ornament (which in a way lacks usefulness); Pesa and Raha are the two boys who are infected by Pambo and they mean 'money' and 'pleasure' respectively. Pambo's two girl friends who fight for him are named Maua - flower, and Wema - goodness. They stand for the respective moral qualities typified in their names.⁴⁸

Muhando uses other devices in the play which are either symbolic or broaden the conflict and make it social. Pambo and the two younger boys are the mad young generation running away from the older generation. This conflict of two systems of values is resolved in favour of the elders. The use of the forest is another feature of the play which is both a symbol and an important structural element. Muhando uses the forest in a typical traditional sense. In traditional narratives, the forest has ambivalent features. On one hand it is a place where evil, madness and death exist or retreat to, on the other, it is a place of sanity, goodness and life. Rarely does one enter the forest and return unchanged. Moreover, being in the forest means being an outcast from society (either for one's good or bad qualities) and being in a state of transition as evidenced in the initiation ceremonies which take place mostly in the bush or forest. Pambo and his madness retreat to the forest. The chase for his sanity takes place there and his outcast status ends when he rejoins the community a sane man.

Pambo has also linguistic and structural elements which are

borrowed from traditional performances. The language and the structure display a strong element of repetition. Actions and words are repeated continuously. The words of Pambo's songs which occur often and for long periods of the play's time are the same verse repeated over and over again. While this heightens the sense of madness in Pambo's character, it also creates a steady rhythm for the play which at times is monotonous. This rhythm is sustained in all the dialogue scenes except the one in which the two women are fighting over Pambo. Repetition can also be seen in the way the chase scenes are structured. The chase is directed to appear from stage right to left or vice versa, over and over again. Each appearance of the chase is a restatement of the same situation rather than an item of progression in either the characters or the plot. But this structure of the chase sequence, is also the result of adhering to proscenium conventions which the writer follows for most of the play except the ending. In order to show that the chase is long in time and space, it has been broken up in scenes which could suit the conventional stage. It has to be remembered, however, this play follows the conventions popular at the time, i.e. the early seventies. Plays were written or devised with a conventional stage or space which could obey proscenium conventions in mind.

Both Pambo and Martin Kayamba have taken the educated man as the protagonist. They both condemn the protagonists' individualistic aspirations and their need to be better than others just because they have had education. But education has not only brought problems for



Figure 11: Pambo, UDSM, 1975.



Figure 12: Mabatini, Paukwa TG, DSM, 1977.

the individual as depicted in the two plays. Nor has cultural alienation been its major effect on the society. It has made it possible to acquire economic and political power for some and social objectives and means for survival for others. For some, individual development means education. G.Z. Kaduma's Mabatini⁴⁹ looks at the aspirations of social groups as they are linked to education and the frustrations which can result when the attainment of education is blocked.

Mabatini was written and first performed in 1976. Over the years it has become one of the most frequently performed plays in either its original or adapted versions. This popularity has been due to the topicality of its subject matter and the questions it raises for parents, teachers, students and politicians. The play centres around a peasant family whose economic and social hopes have been invested in its only child, a girl, who is about to finish her secondary education. The parents hope that when the girl finishes school, she will go into either teacher or secretarial training. This, they hope, will be a preamble to the uplifting of their lives from the squalor and poverty in which they live. Their dreams are shattered when they discover that the girl is pregnant and after an unsuccessful abortion attempt, she is forced to leave school.

The topic of the pregnancies of school girls has drawn much attention during the period after 1967. It has been widely written about in the newspapers, was the subject of many programmes on the radio and was debated in Parliament in the late seventies and early

eighties. Mabatini has been one example in which theatre has echoed this concern.⁵⁰ Kaduma sidesteps the moral issues which have been common when dealing with the unwanted pregnancies of school girls. It is not so much the social shame which the girl brings in getting pregnant that the parents are concerned with but what the pregnancy means to their economic and social development. When the girl's mother discovers that her daughter is pregnant, her first concern is not the girl, Zaina, but her husband. She arranges for Zaina to have an abortion with the hope that her husband's dreams might still have a chance of becoming a reality. When the abortion fails and Zaina is thrown out of school, the girl's welfare is still peripheral to the parents. Kaduma's point in this is that education is not a personal commodity. He brings to mind a common story which is often used to illustrate this point in Tanzania. It goes like this: A country suffering from famine sends a young man to distant lands for help. He is given the last piece of bread the community has and is expected to return to save his people. Failure to return or return without the expected help is betrayal.⁵¹ In the play, Zaina has betrayed her family by not doing what has been expected of her especially after what the parents have sacrificed to ensure she is educated.

Another point which Kaduma tries to make through Mabatini concerns who is responsible for the frustration of the common man's dreams. The man who impregnates Zaina is a government official who has used false promises to ensnare the girl. This man never makes an appearance on the stage and only once is his voice heard from off stage.

He is made a representative figure of all those who have political and economic power but care for no one except themselves and their pleasures. He and his set know about the poor people's struggle to advance themselves through education. So the man promises Zaina a scholarship for further studies while he seduces her and blocks her chances for education completely. Besides pointing an accusatory finger at such men, Kaduma shows his anger at the fact that such people get away free while the consequences of their actions are faced by others. The solution to the problems established in the play, however, appears ambiguous and open to interpretation. After discussing the situation they are in, Baba Zaina, his wife and another couple whose daughter is also in the same predicament as Zaina propose some solutions. The strongest of these solutions is given by Baba Zaina in the last speech of the play:

Baba Zaina: (he speaks thoughtfully) We shall go to the Party. It is the Party which has given these people [the corrupters of girls] their positions but the Party did not order them to use their positions for their own interests, then justice demands that the Party strip them their positions. Yes, the Party is our hope. Only the Party.⁵²

But the Party is not an amorphous thing. It is an organization of people - the same culprits who are responsible for the problem in the first place. By investing the Party with the power of solution Kaduma is doing one or all of three things: (a) reflecting the actual trust the people have had in the Party in their real lives especially during this period when the supremacy of the Party was a major factor in the country; (b) raising questions as to the Party's ability to solve the

problems; (c) highlighting the poor people's lack of political awareness and the mystification which surrounds the Party. While all three options are suggested and can be strengthened in performance, Kaduma himself seems to prefer the first one which he used when directing the first production of the play in 1976.

Mabatini follows mostly a realistic structure which seeks to evoke emotional responses from the audience. The dialogues are natural and in the first two scenes, they are tightly constructed. In these scenes, Kaduma shows his ability to build the action with ease endowing even the melodramatic moments with comedic elements which are part of such situations in life. He makes much use of silences to create moods and suspense. He advocates an acting style which he says should make the performers exhausted and drained at the end of it:

... The actor should use much more time in listening to himself; he should listen to what he says; he should listen even to his thoughts and he should listen to his hate and vulnerability. As the actors will see, this play will exhaust them like people who have witnessed deaths and burials for an extended period.⁵³

This realistic approach to create empathy is followed through even in scenes where the structure does not follow dramatic realism. In scene three of the play, for example, Kaduma uses dance to express the situation. In the first production of the play Kaduma choreographed the dance so that it took up most of the scene. Through the dance, the girl Zaina is shown to go through the pains of the induced abortion. Even though the dance movements extend beyond realism, their object is to create empathy in the audience and make them feel whether girls should be subjected to such painful acts. But because the scene is

powerful due to its structure as dance, it does not easily blend in with the other scenes. Some productions have got around the problem by ignoring the suggested dance and opting for a shorter scenario showing Zaina realistically in pain. (The published version suggests drama more than dance.)

The use of dance in Mabatini, however, is a major characteristic of the writer who has a strong background and training in dance. Besides his interest and knowledge of traditional dance, Kaduma was the first Tanzanian to go abroad in the early seventies to train in dance.⁵⁴ His dance creations, therefore, reflect an interaction between African and Western modes of dance. This is clearly shown in another play of his where he has used the same structure found in Mabatini in which a dance scene is surrounded by realistic dialogue scenarios. The play, Dhamana (Pledge) is published together with Mabatini but was written and performed earlier in 1975. The play which looks at another side of education - the behaviour of students and teachers in an educational institution - has one long dream sequence in which two characters perform traditional dances, mime, and some forms of modern dance more familiar to contemporary Europe. After making the characters do a couple of traditional dances, Kaduma goes on to describe one of the following dance sequences thus:

... Very slowly the girl sits down and stretches her legs forward while her hands rest on her lap. While Sembele's arms are still stretched out like wings, he approaches slowly until he is directly behind the girl. When he is there, he raises his head skyward. The girl also raises up her arms with palm of the hands up until they are like wings. Then, she too like Sembele raises her head to look at the sky ...⁵⁵

The movements are done sometimes with music and sometimes without. They are expressive movements which when taken together make a symbolic gesture. The same approach can be seen in Mabatini although the movement descriptions here are not as elaborate as in Dhamana. The function of the dance scenes in each play and its structure, however, is different. In Mabatini, the dance sequence is part of the progression of the play. It has its cause in the scene preceding it and affects the scene which follows. The dance in Dhamana is a dream sequence which stands on its own. It has neither an immediate cause nor does it inform the events which follow. Like some dreams, the dance sequence is a reflection of issues already dealt with and highlights the writer's stand on the theme under discussion. In this case, the relevance of the hoe in peasant life as well as the peasants' cultural expressions which support that life. In Dhamana, Kaduma is primarily concerned with showing how the attitudes to education and one's behaviour in the process of attaining it are determined by social and class positions. The children of peasants want education because they see it as a factor in improving their lot. The children of the petty bourgeoisie and bureaucrats feel they don't need it because they have and can get what they want through their father's connections. The writer's concern in all this is shown in both Dhamana and Mabatini.

Plays such as Mabatini and Dhamana on one hand, and Pambo and Martin Kayamba on the other contain two attitudes on education which have been officially supported by the Arusha Declaration and subsequent policies as well as by popular attitudes. Firstly, that education is

essential for development but, secondly, this education should not be used for selfish ends or a means to create wider social and class gaps. These are attitudes which are reflected in such other plays as Hesabu Iliyoharibika (The Ruined Census) by Edwin Semzaba⁵⁶ and Dunia Imeharibika (The World in Ruins) by Hassan M. Liyoka.⁵⁷ These plays condemn the negative aspects of education as well as elements of privilege, status and élitism. The conflicts which are portrayed are between the young educated or urbanized individuals and those who are usually older with little or no education or living in the rural areas. Most often the blame is put on the first group and the solutions to the conflicts are situated in this group's abandoning of its values. A solution in which a compromise between the two groups is put forward occurs very rarely in such plays. This is not to say, however, that whatever happens in the rural areas is always presented in a positive light in all plays. But when criticism of rural values (and that usually means traditional values) occurs, there is more selection of the way in which condemnation is directed towards archaic and non-progressive attitudes or individuals who take advantage of traditions to oppress and exploit others. These individuals are shown to practise and hold values which retard social development and are not in line with the ideals of a socialist or contemporary harmonious society. One such play is Hukooo Darisalama⁵⁸ (There in Dar-es-Salaam) by Mobali Muba. The central issue of the play is the traditional expectation that children have an obligation to their parents. This obligation necessitates both moral and material support at varying degrees during

the parents' lifetime as well as after their death. While the obligation is recognized and expected to be fulfilled, certain parents take advantage of it. They expect more than is socially and politically acceptable. In his play, Muba condemns this unreasonable expectation and shows that it violates the work ethics and political aspirations of modern Tanzania.

The central character of Hukooo Darisalama is Baba Semeni who is a peasant. He sees his chance for the good life when his daughter gets married to a man who works and lives in Dar-es-Salaam. Baba Semeni expects his new son-in-law to fulfil his filial duties by sending him regular financial allowances. This expectation leads him to refuse work, borrow heavily from neighbours and spend lavishly. When the money from the son-in-law does not come, Baba Semeni finds himself in trouble and his debtors claim all his property as payment for his debts. The play takes the official line that all those able to work should not exploit others and that traditional beliefs should not be used as excuses to be lazy, selfish and petty exploiters.

As in his other play, Maalim⁵⁹, Muba portrays his characters and the situations in a lighthearted comedic style. He brings into use the comedic approach of Vichekesho and the improvisational techniques learned when he was a performer and writer with the National Drama troupe (see Chapter 5). The play's structure and characters are developed to arouse a strong sense of ridicule so characteristic of Vichekesho. This is achieved by using contradiction and reversals in both what the characters do and say. As in Vichekesho, however, the

dominant comedic element is in the witty language and verbal exchanges of the characters. (On Vichekesho, see section of this chapter.)

The problems of unreasonable behaviour on the part of the older generation of Tanzanians is also the central issue of G. UHINGA's play Rejalla published in a periodical in 1969.⁶⁰ The play portrays a conflict between the old and the young in order to underscore the need for the various races to exist in one nation. An African young man and an Indian girl fall in love. The parents from both sides oppose a marriage between the young people primarily because of rigid cultural attitudes which have separated the different races for a long time. After the young people elope and establish themselves as a family, the elders from both sides are forced to accept the situation and come to a compromise with each other and their children. This nationalistic fervour for racial integration seems to be such a driving force for the play that the writer avoids incorporating any factors which might complicate his intentions. He avoids, for example, the social and economic issues which have informed the cultural differences of the two races in Tanzania. Incorporation of such issues might have made the play less naive and probably less optimistic. But the late sixties, when the play was written, was a period of optimism. It was a period when people believed that national ideals could easily be attained.

Rejalla and Hukooo Darisalama use settings which explore the relationship of individuals but with specific intentions of highlighting political and social ideas of the post Arusha era. Similar approaches

can be seen in such other plays as Ibrahim Ngozi's Machosi ya Mwanamke (A Woman's Tears)⁶¹, Penina Mhando's Heshima Yangu (My Honour)⁶² and Talaka si Mke Wangu (I Divorce You)⁶³. While Mhando's plays show a general and social approach which aims at didacticism and underscoring a moral, Ngozi like Muba, links his play to specific political and topical issues of the time. They are all, however, concerned with behavioral attitudes of individuals which adversely affect the development of others or oppose, directly or indirectly, the ideals of an equitable society.

The most important issue which Machosi ya Mwanamke (published in 1977) tries to explore is the position of the woman in society generally and in marriage specifically. This is not surprising since the play was written to mark the beginning of the United Nations' Women's Decade inaugurated in Mexico in 1975. The questions which Ngozi sets himself to explore are summarized in his introduction to the play:

... the question of bride price, custody of children etc.
 What kind of oppression is perpetuated against women?
 What kind of equality do they want? Equality in which
 conditions? Who should be responsible? Will it be
 attained? How? ...⁶⁴

All these questions do appear in the play but some get more attention than others. The questions are posed as problems in the play but Ngozi's concern is not to provide an in depth analysis of the problems or lead his audience towards viable solutions. His play tries to demonstrate the plight of women as an oppressed group and how the different types of oppressions manifest themselves. The structure of the play and the characters are constructed to show what the reality

for women is rather than establish a challenge as to how it can be changed.

Machozi ya Mwanamke centres around a polygamous man who changes wives as fast as he changes shirts. He is a tyrant who beats his wives and treats them as cheap labour and slaves. His general attitude is that women are weak, expendable and objects for a man's pleasure and use. One day, fed up with their husband's oppressive ways, the three current wives join forces and beat him up. In the aftermath of this beating and more quarrelling, the women leave their husband. The last part of the play takes place in a meeting where the action of the women is discussed and the writer uses the time to bring out numerous other issues concerning women and their liberation. What one gets from the discussion is the writer's belief that men will have to change their attitudes towards women if women are to liberate themselves. In spite of this slim hope for the possibility of change, the play displays a general tone of pessimism regarding women's liberation. This is primarily because the women characters in the play are not individuals who can sustain their own initial impetus for liberation or are conscious enough to realize that social structures as well as attitudes are responsible for their oppression and exploitation. When the women walk out of their husband's clutches, one knows that these women have reacted impetuously. Since they are all social and economic dependents of the husband, their 'freedom' cannot last long. Towards the end of the play, the men are discussing whether the women will return to their husband or not:

Madahiro: ... Now they have left me. Have they liberated themselves that way? What exactly have they achieved? Men don't like to be ruled by their wives. That's why, they will not be married and in the end they'll start again looking for husbands. There is nothing like equality or liberation.

Nzole: They will never come back ...

Manila: Those will come back!

Wambali: They will not come back!

Madahiro: They will come back! Tomorrow Mlahaka is returning to me. I know how to treat women!⁶⁵

One has the strongest of suspicions that Madahiro and Manila are right.

The women are vulnerable because economically and socially, they are defined in terms of their husbands. The fact that Madahiro mentions Mlahaka as the most likely to return first is no accident. Of the wives, she is the most vulnerable and most inflexible about her own position as woman and wife. She is more traditional and is less able to cope with social and economic independence. The other two wives have a better chance of economic survival but they too will return because of their prescribed roles of wives and mothers. The writer points to the need to recognize women's rights as workers, mothers and partners in marriage but the play paints a bleak future for women's rights. Women might stage minor rebellions against their oppressors but they don't have the power. Socially they are invisible and the writer underlines this by making the men rather than the women participate in the discussions concerning the women's plight. It is an element which speaks for the continuation of the situation of women

as it exists rather than make a demand for revolution.

Penina Muhando's Heshima Yangu (1971) portrays also the relationship between men and women with the emphasis put on the conflict between hypocrisy and tyranny on one hand, innocence and love on the other. An old man forbids his daughter from marrying a young man because the young man is a bastard. The union will not suit his 'honour'. In the course of the play it is revealed that it has also not suited 'his honour' to make it known that the young man is actually his son from a liaison twenty-five years back. The young man's mother has had to bear the shame and guilt by herself for all those years. In spite of the old man's protestations the 'secret' is finally revealed and the young lovers learn they are brother and sister. The play is another case of Alikiona (see Chapter 3) where an individual is visited by the results of his previous actions and attitudes. Muhando, however, takes time to bring out several issues about contemporary society. Salum, the young man is shown to be a victim of other people's actions and archaic attitudes which have no place in contemporary society. He and the girl are innocents who are deprived of the opportunity of fulfillment because of a social stigma bestowed on one of them. The real obstacle to the love affair, however, is the tyranny and hypocrisy of the old man, Mzee Issa. The young people would not have fallen in love in the first place if Mzee Issa had not been too selfish and preoccupied with 'his honour'. Even with the knowledge that Salum is his son, he abuses the young man and ostracises him for reasons which he, Mzee Issa, is responsible for. Muhando makes Mzee Issa a

contemporary old man. He is a ten-cell leader in his place of residence and as such holds local political power. Muhando indirectly condemns the hypocrisy and greed for power of such leaders who have no one else's welfare at heart except their own. Indirectly also the play points to elements of social oppression endured by women because the man's position is seen as superior to that of the woman.

While the moral of the play is quite clear, Muhando makes her didactic and moral intentions even clearer in Talaka si Mke Wangu written earlier but published in 1976. The topic is again the relationship of men and women and how it affects the children who are the products of this relationship. The moral of the play can be summed up in the Kiswahili proverb, 'Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo' (Lit. The way you bring up a child that is the way it grows)*. In Talaka si Mke Wangu, Muhando tries to show how the activities of parents help shape the moral and physical world of children. The play indicts irresponsible parents who put their selfish desires and needs first while forgetting the needs of their children. The main character of the play is Kona, a young boy who becomes a thief and is jailed. The play puts the blame of Kona's predicament on his parents. His natural parents divorce because of petty squabbles and for their own material and social needs. The father takes on a new wife who turns out to possess all the evils of stepmothers and seems akin to Cinderella's stepmother. In this situation Kona is shown to have

* Commonly translated as 'spare the rod and spoil the child' but this is only part of the connotation of the Kiswahili proverb.

received an unstable upbringing and a bad foundation to cope with life. Kona behaves as he does because of factors in his upbringing and because of the need to survive.

Unlike the lineal presentation of Heshima Yangu, Muhando develops Talaka si Mke Wangu using scenes which intercut between the present and the past. The scenes move from Kona in jail to events preceding his incarceration and back to jail again. All the events are informed by the commanding presence of the jail structure present during all the flashback scenes. It is a device which underlines the moral of the play. Kona's jail is a creation of the parents' behaviour and his arrival there has been determined by their uncaring selfishness. When Kona attempts to escape from jail, he is shot and reapprehended. His mother's lamentations in the end arouse little sympathy. She, like Hussein's Saida in Alikiona deserves what befalls her. It is a moral which is supposed to warn parents and the society as a whole. It reflects the concern of the early seventies about the needs for relevant education and upbringing of the children as a sound basis for social development. In this, parents as well as society have a role to play and the play makes this quite clear.

3. Nationalism and Ujamaa

The most direct response of theatre towards the Arusha Declaration is exemplified in plays which strongly support Ujamaa as a viable political and economic organization of society. The plays usually follow one of two approaches (sometimes a mixture of the two): they

provide a rationale as to why Ujamaa as a form of socialist organization is preferable and/or how this type of organization should function. Within the context of Tanzania, this has meant also that the plays show a strong bias for elements which support the type of economic production needed in the Ujamaa organization, i.e. agriculture or Ujamaa living. Where the plays portray their themes in terms of urban /rural conflict, the resolution favours the rural generally or Ujamaa villages specifically. Likewise, the outcome of conflicts between capitalism and socialism is predictable also. The ideological support towards Ujamaa which the five plays reviewed here display is characteristic of the euphoric attitudes towards the Arusha Declaration especially in the late sixties and early seventies. Out of the seven plays reviewed in this section, only one was written after 1976. In its approach to the theme of Ujamaa, the play seems to belong to the earlier period before 1977 when writers were more concerned about supporting Ujamaa and its specific elements unequivocally, rather than reflecting on its problems.

Hussein's Mashetani portrays a neo-colonial society which has to come to grips with its historical reality and values. The Arusha Declaration becomes a necessary event in the re-organization of society for new values. The seven plays in this section portray a society which has two choices in systems of living and the one which is rational is that advocated by Arusha. Penina Muhando's Hatia (Guilt) which was published in 1972 displays this common approach.⁶⁶ The theme of the play is developed through the conflicts between old traditional values

and the new urban culture. The solution to the problems of this conflict is invested in the new organizations for living - the Ujamaa villages.

Hatia takes its action from the activities of a young girl, Cheja, who is jilted by her young lover after she gets pregnant while living in Dar-es-Salaam. She tries to cover her shame and predicament by returning to her parents in the village and accuses an older man as the father of her unborn child. This older man is materially well off and also lives in the city. When this older man, Sembuli, denies any responsibility, the elders resort to a traditional ritual in order to get to the truth. The ritual of oath taking entails the person involved (in this case Sembuli) to extract a stone from boiling goat's fat. Sembuli, however, refuses to participate because he does not believe 'in these things'. Instead, he accuses someone else as responsible for Cheja's condition. As a result of all this, fights and divisions ensue amongst the villagers until finally Cheja confesses. Since there is nothing that the elders or Cheja can do regarding the man responsible for Cheja's pregnancy, Cheja makes a decision to start a new life in a newly organized village - an Ujamaa village. This final solution to Cheja's problems is in line with the general precepts of Arusha regarding Ujamaa and also shows support for the villagization exercises which were going on at the time the play was written.

The theme of the play is developed through six short scenes. Through these the two types of life styles are differentiated. On one hand are the older men and women of the village who are living the

old traditional ways. On the other are the young men and women who have adopted a new life style of the city. While one is shown to be a continuous, communal and responsible kind of life, the other is fragmented, individualistic and selfish. The citizens of the old ways find support and healing in their times of trouble but those in the city find only rejection and loneliness. This is shown through the character of Cheja. At the beginning of the play Cheja is shown to be lost and alone, wandering around and talking to herself. In the village, Cheja's problem becomes everybody's problem. The communality and democratic way of handling things is shown through village meetings and public functions in which much of the village interaction takes place. Muhando takes time in creating the social atmosphere through the ritual ceremonies, traditional courtesies and sharing. Muhando, however, is careful not to portray traditional life as being too perfect or too idyllic. There is greed, thoughtlessness and even cheating in the community. Cheja's father and brother are concerned more with how much they can materially benefit from Cheja's predicament than the welfare of Cheja herself. The medicine man violates the trust people have in him by cheating when nobody is looking. This is a human community which in spite of these foibles, the writer thinks is more positive than the urban community.

Muhando displays her ideological enthusiasm by providing a solution which is outside the logical progression of the events in the play. Cheja's last decision, for example, is quite contrary to the character portrayed up to that point. Prior to her last decision,

Cheja is shown to be a weak character who is indecisive and quite confused. She lacks the courage of going through with the suicide she contemplates a couple of times and hides behind lies to save herself from the situation she is in. She is the type of character who would logically disintegrate further and become useless to herself or the community. She might also be rescued from the follies of her actions by chance or divine intervention. Muhando, however, provides an ending which defies any realistic expectations. Some critics have seen this ending of the play as a major weakness not because it does not arise from a logical progression but rather it fails to provide a real solution to the problems established in the play. One of these critics voiced her dissatisfaction thus:

Cheja's decision to go to Majogo [the organized village] is not enough to solve such a problem [Cheja's]. If the decision at the end of the play is intended to solve the problem in Hatia, then it is not enough ... It is as if a new patch has been sown on an old garment.⁶⁷ (my translation)

This criticism is valid if Muhando's intentions were to portray the aspects of one problem and provide a solution for it, or if her intentions were a purely moral lesson. Cheja's decision is an ideological choice imposed on the character and the events to show not how things usually end but how they should end. As such, the ending is close to a Brechtian technique which negates the expected. Brecht, however, portrays the characters and events with a duality of opposing elements whose option at any particular time is feasible. Moreover, some of his plays show the events and the characters' actions as having a historical causality not in line with a realistic progression.⁶⁸

Hatia shows that it lacks the duality of opposing elements which might justify the ending and that the play has two types of progression within it: the internal cause and effect given to most scenes of the play and an external causality exemplified in the ending of the play. This inconsistency in the way events and characters develop tends to highlight the ideological motives at the end of the play. The contrast of the structure at the beginning of the play and at the end is similar to the contrast in Cheja's character at the beginning and at the end. Both move from the way things are to the way they ought to be. The change underscores the aesthetic and ideological support of the new system of organization of society. Cheja's character, therefore, makes sense as a symbol and a representation of a social group. Her weakness is the representation of a group without social or economic power who because of its needs has to take the necessary step to effect change. In this Muhando is using a character who has much in common with other characters popularly portrayed during this time - those who have been failed by a social and economic system which is predominantly capitalist. The unemployed, the poor, the exploited and oppressed of the urban areas were familiar figures in plays which advocated the move to the villages. The popularity of such figures in the plays is not so much as to show, according to Senkoro, that the Ujamaa village is 'a conglomeration of amongst others, all those "thugs" and whores'⁶⁹ but to emphasize the need of the downtrodden in society to opt out of systems which oppress them. The plays seem to say that Ujamaa should be embraced by those who need social change the

most. Cheja represents all these as a woman, a peasant and a worker. Cheja's move from the village to the town and her parents' expectation of what the move means to their poverty establishes the link between the village and the capitalist values of the urban centres. Cheja's mother explains:

All this is the result of poverty. If my daughter had not gone to work in Dar-es-Salaam ...⁷⁰

This statement, to some extent, shows why Muhando makes Cheja decide to go to the new village. Both the traditional village and the urban centres seem to have failed in providing solutions to poverty and social problems. In spite of her sympathies for the traditional way of life, Muhando hints that the old ways may not be the answer to contemporary problems resulting from a capitalist system which has affected both urban and rural areas. The answer lies in opting for a socialist organization. The criticism, therefore, that Muhando has failed to provide a solution for the problems she has established overlooks the underlying ideological attitude of the play which is that there can be no solution in either the traditional or the urban systems of living.

There is another point which Muhando tries to make through Hatia - the inability of the neo-colonial élites to bring needed social and economic changes. This is done through Cheja and Sembuli. Sembuli is a character with ambiguities and through him the contradictions between the group he represents and the villagers, as well as those between him and the urban poor are exposed. Materially he is well off living in the city but with strong ties in the village where his

position commands respect. He does not, however, hesitate to spurn the villagers when his interests are threatened. He tries to do this without jeopardizing his position in the village. His relationship to the city dwellers is that of a reformer. He sees social change as the provision of humanistic education and dealing with individual deviants. It is due to these characteristics in Sembuli that Mollé has asserted, 'Sembuli presents to the audience the idealistic reformist views of the playwright'.⁷¹ But Muhando makes Sembuli an ineffective character, a man of compromise who has too much at stake to opt for drastic changes and translate his rhetoric for action. Cheja, the worker/peasant and not Sembuli is made the agent of change. So instead of looking at Sembuli and his 'postures' as Muhando's attempt at legitimizing his class as agents of change⁷², the character has to be seen as a member of a class whose values and aspirations inhibit change.

A less ambitious play but using a similar subject to the one found in Hatia is Huka by Ngalimecha Ngahyoma which was published in 1975.⁷³ As in Hatia, the urban culture is shown to be at odds with the rural culture but the writer's sympathies lie with the latter. The plot portrays the problems of a young girl, Huka, who is attracted by the town life but is unable to cope with it. She neglects her studies because of the attentions she gets from a 'sugar-daddy'. The man gives Huka material things and money while promising to marry her after he divorces his wife. On a visit to the village, Huka finds out that her parents are making preparations for her to marry a young man from the village. Not willing to accept this situation Huka runs back to

the city, but the city is inhospitable. The 'sugar-daddy' is no longer interested in her and instead of divorcing his wife, he is reconciled with her and brutally kicks Huka out, even after learning that the girl is pregnant with his child. Huka has no choice but to return to the village where she hopes to start a new life.

Like Muhando, Ngahyoma tries to portray the contrast between village and urban life. In Huka, town life is shown to be harsh and individualistic. Even the children have been brutalized in the city and are desperate to protect their interests. The sugar-daddy's children beat up Huka because she is a threat to their family's position as a well-to-do respectable unit. The man himself has used Huka as a plaything and throws her out when it does not suit him. In the village, however, Huka's parents and relatives share their disappointment as a community and they are all ready to forgive and help. Huka's decision to stay in the village is rationalized by the contrast of the two cultures and her choice becomes rational because the alternative - the city life - has been made as unattractive as possible. But unlike Cheja in Hatia, Huka opts to stay in the old village and work towards social change there. It is a choice which supports traditional rural values and way of living, but the play suggests needed reforms. The village is seen as a better basis for social change than the cultural values of the urban areas. The rejection of the urban cultural values is underlined in Huka's intended abortion at the end of the play. In spite of her mother's protestations and an awareness of the moral implications of the abortion, Huka insists on going through with it.

This insistence to abort the child makes sense when looked at as a symbolic gesture. It arises from a need to cleanse oneself from the 'pollution' of the city and cut off any links with it in the future. It is an idealistic gesture but serves to highlight the playwright's rejection of the urban elements.

Mwanzo wa Tufani (The Source of the Storm) is another play which has supported the official attitude towards moving to villages and especially the Ujamaa villages. Even though it was published in 1975 the original version, Lengo letu (Our Objective) was written in 1972 by the same writers K.K. Kahigi and A.A. Ngemera. The play was written, as in the case of Hatia and Huka, at a time when the villagization campaigns were at their most active. The play is developed through four acts each containing several scenes set in and around the capital town of Sawia of the fictional country of Kulanda. Most of the play shows the conflict between the haves and the have-nots in the city. The last scene shows some of the have-nots and jobless of the city in an Ujamaa village where they are in the process of being members. The underlying attitude of the play is that there is a need to resolve the conflicts and contradictions within the society which can be solved only by those affected most - the poor of the cities who need to see in Ujamaa their only salvation.

The central character of Mwanzo wa Tufani is Kazimoto who at the beginning of the play is a domestic servant in a businessman's household. Kazimoto is mistreated, abused and exploited by the whole household including the children. A contrast is established between the

crude opulence of the Kitambis and their oppressive ways on one hand and Kazimoto's poverty and dreams of change on the other:

Kazimoto: ... He who gave you is the one who denied me. And if there were no people like us, then the work we do would have to be done by yourselves. And maybe in the future, things like servant and master will be pushed into the darkness. It is your wealth which has made us poor.

Zawadi [Kitambi's wife]: Dog! It is your laziness which has made you poor and you will remain kitchen servants after generations and generations.⁷⁵

It is a confrontation of two sides of the neo-colonial reality.

Kazimoto is not alone. In the streets, the jobless and petty traders are fighting each other for food and to get rid of their general frustrations. The atmosphere is summed up in a scene where the writers propagate what should be done to instigate a revolution - the poor should make their voice heard. The storm which has been instigated by oppression and exploitation picks up momentum with the activities of the urban poor who are agitating for change. The first step towards revolution is to conscientize and a call is made:

Awake! Ye dwellers of the street, awake! Awake and read 'Our Goal!' ... The oppressors must go!⁷⁶

The tensions between the urban élite and the poor are developed alongside a romantic plot between Kazimoto and the daughter of Kitambi, Tereza. Kitambi and his wife are against the two marrying because as the wife says, 'it is embarrassing for our daughter to marry a poor man like that'.⁷⁷ Tereza, however, defies her parents and elopes with Kazimoto. This sub-plot is tied to the major plot at the end where Kazimoto, Tereza and the urban jobless all turn up at an Ujamaa village

to start a new life. The romance between Kazimoto and Tereza tries to establish an ideological alliance between the poor and those not so poor but who have thrown their lot in with the poor. The writers avoid developing the conflict to a violent confrontation between the exploited and their exploiters in both the main and the sub-plots. Instead they diffuse the crisis by removing the exploited from the urban conflict centre to the new villages. This play, like the other two discussed above, is a directly Ujamaa inspired play. The ideological and moral content have been structured to express values supporting and opposing Ujamaa. The writers present Ujamaa as not only the rational choice needed to solve socio-economic conflicts and contradictions but are also optimistic and sure of Ujamaa's future success in spite of obstacles on the way. This is pointed out by the leader in the Ujamaa village where Kazimoto and the others have taken refuge:

... We must remember that if we want to build a new road, we must pull out the stumps, fill up the potholes, explode rocks, cut through mountains, build bridges over rivers and so on ... This is only the beginning but we shall triumph.⁷⁸

There is also a warning for those who don't want to embrace Ujamaa:

... What I want to emphasize is that we shall leave them behind and later on, when they realize the truth, they will blame themselves and say, 'if only we had known ...'⁷⁹

Not to embrace Ujamaa is not only anti-development but it is also an act of folly. It is an attitude which can also be found in Giza

Limeingia (The Dawn of Darkness) by E. Mbogo⁸⁰ and The Contest by

Mukotani Ruyendo.⁸¹ These two plays, however, (and especially The Contest) display innovative and interesting form structures which stand

out from the others advocating Ujamaa values. Each has contributed new approaches to contemporary Tanzanian drama.

The Contest is included in the current study for three reasons: Rugyendo, the writer, though Ugandan, received his university education in Tanzania and his ideas about the theatre were nurtured there when he was first a student and later a worker of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. He was, therefore, a major participant and voice of the ideas on theatre as a social and aesthetic phenomenon during the early seventies in Tanzania. The play was first written in 1974 as part of a course in the Theatre Arts Department and an original manuscript remains in its archive there. The Contest as a form is based on the traditional heroic recitations of the Nyakyusa, Zanaki, Kurya, Ngoni, Masai and especially the Bahayas around Lake Victoria whose recitations are similar to the peoples in Uganda primarily the Bahima, Banyankole, Banyarwanda and Bakiga (see Chapter 1). Thirdly, the first known production of this play was put up by a group in Dar-es-Salaam in 1980. The group adapted Rugyendo's original English version into Kiswahili. The adapted version provides insights into the strengths as well as the problems of the form and Rugyendo's intentions in the original. The play's interest is then twofold: as a response to immediate political and social needs as well as being the first play to seriously attempt using a traditional form for a contemporary purpose.

The Contest is about two 'heros' who have come to compete and win the 'village belle', Maendeleo (Development). The villagers gather around to listen to the heros as they recite their praises and

eventually judge who should claim Maendeleo. The event is important to the village because Maendeleo is not just any girl, she is 'the product of our collective force'⁸², she is the symbol of villagers' development. There is a drummer who acts as a master of ceremonies, elders and dancers to cheer the heroes and encourage them in their performance. The theatre has been turned into a social arena where the society has been called to choose between two political systems as represented by the two heroes:

Hero 1: We! The Great Mungwes!
 We have met Europeans, Indians, Arabs, Chinese and
 what have you. All of them came as friends and we
 received them thus. They bought from us and we
 from them. But we remained the Mungwes.

...

And the Mungwes ate and grew,
 Built good houses, schools and hospitals
 The Mungwes owned shops
 The hardworking of them
 Owned five shops.⁸³

Hero 2: I bear the shield of the people who speak of freedom!
 Those who stand on their own, and dig their land
 themselves. Those who have cut the tentacles of
 all those who would speak of their wealth. And
 cannot allow themselves to be robbed or cheated.
 The true enemies of those who want to buy low and
 sell high.⁸⁴

Hero 1 presents a world of opulence, where not only coffee and bananas are plentiful but also 'cattle from abroad', cars and tractors. A land of fat and beautiful inhabitants where 'masters of knowledge from across the seas helped the sons of the Mungwes' to prosper until 'factory married factory and produced a daughter factory'. Hero 2 meanwhile boasts of a world where people want to develop but 'not as

appendages to foreigners'. The inhabitants are routing all corruption and decadence; are forging cooperation and 'distribution of rewards of each one's labour'.⁸⁵ There is some validity in identifying the two systems as capitalism and socialism. Much of what Hero 2 says, for example, can be identified with various features of Tanzania's Ujamaa, i.e. self reliance, democracy, cooperative and Ujamaa villages. The people's choice for Hero 2 in the play is to some extent unexpected. The two heroes are presented with equal strength. As such there is no realistic justification for choosing one as superior to the other and the outcome of the contest can be seen as arbitrary. The outcome has been not aesthetically but ideologically 'rigged'. The presentation of the two heroes is a metaphor for capitalism and socialism as found in post independence Africa. Most often, the differences between them are small and the peasantry has little to say in either system. But in spite of this, the writer intervenes and makes socialism the people's choice. The debate structure which Ruyendo uses in The Contest is not open-ended as Etherton claims.⁸⁶ The play has a closed structure with a definite choice made at the end. What Ruyendo leaves open are those aesthetic inputs needed during performance to sway the people to his chosen system. His ideological bias is clearly spelt out in the production notes to the play in which he indicates his source of inspiration:

There is something specially rich and liberating about modern Chinese, Vietnamese and North Korean revolutionary theatre which is indispensable to the building of socialism in those societies. This has mainly come from the way in which cultural workers have very enterprisingly married the

realities of peoples struggling to build new societies with the living aspects of their long cultural heritage.⁸⁷

The Contest is the writer's attempt at putting theatre at the service of the people's struggle. As he himself points out earlier on, 'as African society becomes more technologically advanced and as the struggle to emancipate man from economic exploitation and spiritual dehumanization goes on, there is something about traditional art forms which must invariably be part of this struggle'.⁸⁸

One element from traditional art forms which Ruyendo attempts in The Contest is the bridging of the gap between performer and audience. The setting of the play is the village square, a theatre in the round space which facilitates easy communication between the performers and an audience. The 'audience' characters of the play are supposed to act as a catalyst to the larger audience in providing responses. The heroic recitations and the speeches demand to be delivered to those assembled rather than to particular characters. More interaction between performers and audience is established through dances and songs suggested at various points in the play. Ruyendo has offered the play as an experiment to be experimented further. This is exactly what the Paukwa Theatre Group based in Dar-es-Salaam tried to do with its 1980 production.⁸⁹ The production highlighted Ruyendo's structural elements as well as pointing to other issues in the experimentation. The play was translated into Kiswahili and several elements added to the original. The role of the drummer, for example, was expanded into two; more material was written for them as well as for the two old people in the play. A third Hero was introduced who was the

contemporary version of Hero 1 - a metaphor for neo-colonialism. Much more dancing was incorporated and forms like proverbs, ritual, storytelling and songs were included in many more places than suggested in the original. New scenes were also written in. Maendeleo was put through an initiation-like ceremony in which the elders expressed their expectations of her as well as taught her new functions as wife, mother and social member of society. This was meant to express the people's aspirations on development. The initiation scene was preceded by another new scene in which the people enacted their history to emphasize why they needed to choose the right type of system for their development. Two things were highlighted in this production. The rendition of The Contest in an indigenous language restored those aesthetic qualities of poetry, sign notations in the sound and words as well as rhythms and performance qualities difficult to reproduce in English. Ruyendo himself must have realized the limitations of writing the play in English as he points out in the production notes:

Rendition into English certainly curtails much of the poetic quality, especially the even relationship between the dance and gestures with the tonal structure of the recited word.⁹⁰

The Kiswahili version of The Contest came closer to the original praise poem structure and availed itself more to the suggested performance milieu. Part of the performance milieu is the element of participation and is the second factor which the production highlighted. The performers were more able to draw in the participation of the audience in Dar-es-Salaam than they were in Germany where the production was taken for a theatre festival. Even in Dar-es-Salaam, participation was

limited somewhat. There were two reasons for this. First of all, the production was too formally conceived so that the play was too tight to allow the informal elements of participation. More importantly, there was the nature of the audience which was heterogenous. Participation in popular performances relies on besides the skills of the performers to draw the audience in, the familiarity with performance codes and signs on the part of the audience. Given the type of audience Ruyendo is writing for and those who saw the production of the play in Dar-es-Salaam (they were not peasants) more experimentation to make the unfamiliar familiar was needed for more participation. The setting of the play proved also to need more experimentation. An indoor, theatre-in-the-round space seemed to contribute to the rigidity of the play. An out of doors setting with the audience standing rather than sitting might open other areas of participation and informality. More productions of The Contest might provide useful inputs for this play and others which open themselves to experimentation.

Giza Limeingia (The Dawn of Darkness) by Emmanuel Mbogo is another play supportive of Ujamaa. The play was written in 1977 and performed in November of that year but was not published until 1980. The play portrays three characters and their struggles for survival in modern Tanzania. It is set at a time when the Party and government are waging another campaign to settle the jobless of the urban areas either in nearby Ujamaa villages or in their home villages.⁹¹ The events of the play are set in a small cramped room in a poor section of Dar-es-Salaam. The room belongs to Tupa, a petty trader of ground-nuts

and sometime thief. He is streetwise and has managed to evade the People's Militia in charge of rounding up the jobless of the city. He dreams of leaving the country and going to Zambia where he believes he can become rich quick by engaging in the black market at the border of the two countries. He tries to persuade his cousin, Mashaka, to join in his activities. Mashaka who has finished secondary school cannot find the job he wants. He cannot even go out to look for one because he is afraid of being picked up by the militia. He is totally dependent on Tupa for food and accommodation. The third character is Mashaka's girlfriend, Salome. Salome has been picked up by the militia and at the beginning of the play Tupa and Mashaka are waiting for her to return from Gezaulole, an Ujamaa village outside Dar-es-Salaam. Her stay in the village convinces Salome that the government is right in its resettling campaigns and that the villages are the only solutions to the problems of the Tupas and the Mashakas of Tanzania. She tries to convince the others to follow her example and return to the villages. Defending the official methods of persuasion to send the people to the villages Salome points out:

Today Africa is waging a war against darkness; the neo-colonial and imperialistic darkness. This is a struggle to remove obstacles and change the lives of millions of Africans from poverty and need to a state of development. And if we agree that this is a revolutionary struggle, then you know the conditions and principles of war ...⁹²

To build socialism according to the play, is like going to war and therefore force or violence are sometimes necessary to attain planned objectives. At first Mashaka rejects Salome's ideas but at the end of the play he is less antagonistic against them. Tupa, however, is too

busy making his dreams come true to give Ujamaa living serious consideration. He dies at the end of the play, the result of a gun shot wound he receives while stealing some goods.

Mbogo devotes much time in showing the corruption and negative aspects of neo-colonialism and how it affects the poor. He tries to show that people like Tupa have been forced to live the way they do because they have been locked out of the main stream of political and economic power. Ujamaa living is the only answer to not only the Tupas but also the Mashakas - those with education. Both groups need to shed their illusions and unrealistic dreams. Tupa's death at the end becomes therefore symbolic. His chosen life is doomed to extinction because on one hand, Tupa is unaware and cannot accept the true alternative to his life - socialism; and on the other hand, neo-colonial forces can only make the situation of the poor and those like Tupa worse than better. Salome and people like her will survive because they have seen the light - Ujamaa.

The play weaves between serious discussions and lighthearted moments. Mbogo displays a facility for street language which reflects the colour, idioms and images of the urban dwellers. At the same time political and economic issues are discussed in a language which is highly academic. Besides the lengthy discussions, Mbogo uses role playing and reenactments of scenes which provide information on the wider social and political framework of the events in the play. Tupa and Mashaka for example enact a scenario to show the problems of job hunting especially for young women. Salome's narration about her

stay in Gesaulole is turned into a scenario where she takes the other two characters on a visit there. Mashaka's fear of being caught by the militia is highlighted when Tupa disguises himself in a uniform and pretends to be a militia man. The writer uses these devices to discuss the many economic, social and political situations in the country. Practically every topical problem receives a mention either in passing or in a lengthy debate. The audience is incorporated in the action through the use of not only character asides but also through several speeches addressed to them by the characters. Throughout, the play shifts from realistic to non-realistic conventions by the use of a mixture of mime, props made up of real objects, poetry, street language, political rhetoric, enactment of scenarios within scenes, flashbacks and flashforwards. In the 1977 production of the play, slides were used to show elements of Ujamaa living as Salome narrated her visit there.⁹³ Even though the published play does not suggest the use of slides, their use in the production was quite in line with a play which claims no particular conventional style but in which the writer has used all available elements to put his message across.

The support and endorsement of Ujamaa and socialist organizations can also be found in plays whose settings are either in Ujamaa villages themselves or organizations structured along socialist principles. These plays propagate the idea that socialism alone can solve contemporary political and economic problems but on the way to build the true Ujamaa there will be obstacles. These obstacles will grow either because the people are not aware enough and strong enough to

stop them or because some people take advantage of socialist organizations to further their individual interests. The authors and devisers of such plays call on the people to watch for these elements working against Ujamaa and uproot them. The people's power is shown to reside in the democratic structures provided by Ujamaa, a power which the people are encouraged to be conscious of and exercise.

In these plays, the question of leadership becomes the primary concern. They echo principles advocated by the Arusha Declaration and the 'leadership code' that leaders should be the servants of the people and that they should be principled and adhere to socialist values.⁹⁴ In 1970 a play called Chama Chetu (Our Party) by Gervas Moshiro was published in Darlite⁹⁵. The play shows the corrupt activities of leaders of a cooperative society. When these leaders embezzle some funds, the farmers who are members of the cooperative, kick out the leaders and decide to exercise more power in deciding their fate. This is the line taken by a much longer play by Ngalimecha Ngahyoma, Kijiji Chetu (Our Village) published in 1975 but bore the title Kijiji Mfanobora (A Model Village) when it was written in 1973.⁹⁶ As in Chama Chetu, Kijiji Chetu stresses those elements which need to be uprooted for smooth functioning of socialist structures. The play is set in an Ujamaa village where the economic infrastructure for successful living together has been established. It is an ideal village and what an Ujamaa setting should be like. The writer describes the setting thus:

Beautiful buildings with whitewashed walls and corrugated

iron roofs. In the north of the village, as far as the eye can see, there are big farms. Maize and cassava are flourishing as well as other necessary food and cash crops. There are animal sheds on another side of the village and buildings for leisure activities on another. There is also a cooperative shop. In short it is a village which is beginning to develop so that it can be self-sufficient in all its needs.⁹⁷

It is the type of village which politicians have envisioned to be a direct result of villagization and Ujamaa living. The physical and economic developments of the village, however, are being threatened by a corrupt leadership and reactionary elements. Through a democratic process, the villagers eventually get rid of all these undesirable factors.

The problems of the village are brought to focus through the conflicts between the villagers and a few of their members who have opted out of Ujamaa activities. Amongst these are Kizito, Baperi and Pinduo. They refuse to work in the communal farms and as a result the rest of the village decides to exercise their right in expelling them. While Baperi accepts the verdict and leaves the village quietly, Kizito and Pinduo have different reasons for defying their expulsion and remaining in the village. Kizito wants his wife to go along with him but the wife who has chosen Ujamaa rather than marriage to a man who has rejected its ideals, decides to stay in the village. Pinduo stays because he wants the villagers to be aware of unsocialistic practices carried out under their noses. His refusal to work and cooperate with others in the village is shown to be due to his awareness that individuals are exploiting others in the name of Ujamaa. He is not against Ujamaa. His actions are a protest to highlight the corrupt

practices of the village leadership and organizational loopholes which have allowed people living outside the village to benefit from the sweat of those working in the village. At the end, however, Pinduo is also kicked out of the village. Pinduo is shown to have the correct ideological beliefs but using the wrong tactics which in the long run make him another exploiter of his fellow villagers.

Besides warning against anti-Ujamaa elements the play celebrates the ideals of Ujamaa and the man responsible for its birth. In this, the writer captures the popular spirit prevailing after 1967 in which Nyerere meant Ujamaa and vice versa.⁹⁸ To follow one meant to honour the other. In Part Five of Kijiji Chetu, three women are admiring the well planted communal farm and the scene begins with the following exchanges:

Woman 2: Aah! Look at how the millet flourishes. I have never seen the like.

Woman 3: Aah! Ujamaa, cooperation, unity. It is you I will honour.

Woman 2: Honour Nyerere more who brought Ujamaa.

Woman 3: But Nyerere and Ujamaa are one thing. When I honour Ujamaa I also honour Nyerere and all who love Ujamaa.⁹⁹

Earlier on in Part Two the writer establishes why Nyerere should be honoured and thanked for bringing Ujamaa. An old man addresses a meeting and almost uses Nyerere's own words in rationalizing Ujamaa:

Thanks to Nyerere for bringing back Ujamaa. I think I and my fellow elders know about Ujamaa more than many of you here. We were born in Ujamaa. We grew up in Ujamaa ... Today this Ujamaa which we are living is a new type of Ujamaa.¹⁰⁰

Nyerere's Ujamaa is not only the viable system for social organization



Figure 13: Walivyokuwa Wamelala, UDSM, 1974.



Figure 14: The Contest, Paukwa TG, Erlangen, 1980.

and economic development but also a system which must be guarded against corruptive and reactionary elements. The writer uses the play to underline such Ujamaa ideals as responsible leadership, equality of all men, work ethics, democratic participation and political consciousness. These are also Nyerere's ideals. The writer forwards the belief that even though there might be problems in the achievement of these ideals, Ujamaa as propagated by Nyerere contains within it mechanisms for solving such problems and moving towards the total realization of the ideals.

A slightly different approach to the problems of living together in Ujamaa villages was taken by G.Z. Kaduma's dance-drama The Canker¹⁰¹ performed in 1970. The drama utilized symbolic rather than realistic presentation of the problems of 'evil' and disruption within an Ujamaa village. The villagers find living amongst them a 'mchawi' (a witch) who disrupts the harmonious living of the villagers. When discovered, the 'mchawi' is punished. But the dance-drama was about unity, togetherness and cooperation, so the 'mchawi' is eventually converted to the ideals of Ujamaa living. The high point of the drama was the fight between the villagers and the 'mchawi' which brought victory to the villagers, underlining the triumph of Ujamaa against social evils. As one observer pointed out, 'the message of Ujamaa was understood by the hundreds of school children and adults who saw the dance'.¹⁰² The triumph of Ujamaa and especially the Arusha Declaration was also reflected and was the dominant mood in another play, Walivyokuwa Wamelala (How they have slept) performed in 1974.¹⁰³ This time, Frank

Mziray used the celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the Party, TANU, to bring back the dead and make them witness what Ujamaa and the Arusha Declaration have accomplished.¹⁰⁴ While the thematic concern and the plots of the plays discussed above are unambiguous in their attitude towards Ujamaa, there have been plays whose support for Ujamaa has been general and indirect. The mood of the late sixties and early seventies especially, influenced writers to find ways of not only endorsing Ujamaa but claiming to do so even if their works point to other issues. Aliyeonja Pepo (A Taste of Heaven) by Farouk Topan is one such play whose endorsement of Ujamaa is not as direct as the others discussed so far. Specific issues of Ujamaa living have been discarded in favour of some general ones regarding man's existence, his fate and his priorities in choosing the type of society he can best function in. While the endorsement for socialism is stated at one point of the play, Topan provides a forum to expose religious and existential issues which might affect man in any society.

A Taste of Heaven was first published in 1973 in a Kiswahili version which was later translated into English and published in 1980. Topan sets his play in heaven or the hereafter and uses fantasy and elements of religious myth to develop his plot. Topan portrays a heaven with an invisible God whose masterplan for the taking and resurrecting of human souls has been entrusted to his angels. But the angels and their assistants are incompetent and sometimes create such chaos that drastic rectifications are needed. They have, in this case, accidentally taken the soul of a Tanzanian fisherman instead of an

English wine seller. When God orders the angels to set things right, their first solution is to return the soul of the fisherman to the body of the wine seller. This meets with a strong protest from the fisherman who sees no reason to return to earth 'after tasting heaven'. Moreover, there are cultural and political considerations which the fisherman points out:

Our culture in Bagamoyo is different from theirs [the English]. I am an African they are Europeans. I am a Moslem, they are not. This man keeps a dog, dogs are taboo to me. He sells wines, that is also taboo.¹⁰⁶

The fisherman argues further that he cannot allow his 'socialist heart' to live in a 'capitalist body'.¹⁰⁷ These objections force the angels to come up with a compromise and send Juma Hamisi, the fisherman, back to Bagamoyo not as a man but as a cat.

In the long introduction to the play the writer tries to explain his intentions about the play which centre around the relationship of man's development and religion. At one point, he asks, 'Because man can now live sufficiently with the two tools [of development] ideology and education, can we say that religion is no longer a useful tool for us?'¹⁰⁸ He comes to the conclusion that it is not and explains:

Human beings who fully manage their lives in the world have a political environment, not religious. In this way religion is an additional tool which is hardly necessary in either societies or nations.¹⁰⁹

Topan, however, does not use the play to prove this argument by making direct links between man's development, politics, education and religion. Instead, he concentrates on discrediting some fundamental

orthodox religious beliefs and makes religion obsolete. His attitude is not so much that religion is the opium of the people but that it is irrelevant in solving contemporary life's problems. To discredit religion, he first of all, creates a heaven so chaotic, petty and so irrelevant that one can easily dismiss that place as neither serious nor important. If heaven is such a mess why bother about it? Topan punches more holes in such other religious areas as predestination, good and evil. The attack is presented obliquely rather than directly but the writer's attitudes are unambiguous. Take the idea of predestination, for example, which is represented in the play by God's masterplan. Both Muslims and Christians believe in the inevitability of events because of a certain order preplanned by the Almighty. By making God's plans appear haphazard and chaotic the play tries to invalidate predestination. One can die or live not because it has all been orderly written but one's fate is ruled by unpredictability. It is interesting to note that when a Christian Priest reviewed the play, he reacted strongly against the play's suggestion that those in heaven do not know what they are doing. In the case of the fisherman's death, for example, the priest suggested that the scene be rewritten to show his untimely death was not a mistake but part of the grand plan of God.¹¹⁰ The reviewer points out, 'the Master has written to the letter all the guidelines which direct life on earth ...'¹¹¹ The play negates this and denies a well planned, controlled universe.

The question of good and evil is treated through the portrayal of Satan in the play. It is very clear in the play that God's angels

have mixed up dates, countries and individuals whose fate they control. They, however, put the blame for the whole mess on Satan and his machinations. Satan, on the other hand, sees his absence rather than presence as contributing to the chaos. He feels superior to the others who appear less intelligent and wise. Satan is not an adversary of God but his complement and therefore loved by God. God, therefore, needs Satan to rule the universe. Topan makes Satan say:

... He [God] tugs from here, I tug from there. And the world goes. I make him complete and He makes me complete. Our complementary being is the one that gives the world its present state.¹¹²

This is contrary to orthodox belief in which Satan is a creature of God and there is no question of equality between them. The play makes the issue of good and evil problematic. If good needs evil and vice versa, then evil cannot be condemned because without it there can be no good in the religious rather than social sense. This view, of course, makes believers uncomfortable. The mockery which is directed towards religion, however, is achieved not through the writer's strong unorthodox religious attitudes but through his treatment of the subject matter by using comedy. The philosophical and theological issues are cloaked in a situation and characters who are ridiculous and funny. The laughter directed at the events portrayed makes religious beliefs irrelevant and indirectly directs one to a material and social world. Through this indirect route, Topan tries to show his support for political and social structures which he sees as necessary for man's existence. Religion is somewhat irrelevant especially in a socialist perspective of society. It is a common view which Topan shares with

many writers in Tanzania but his play carries the distinction of being the first to have taken Islam rather than Christianity to task.

4. Nationalism and Ujamaa: Ngonjera

There has been no other theatrical form more identified with the Arusha Declaration than Ngonjera.¹¹³ Ngonjera is a dramatic verse-dialogue form made popular from 1967 by first the late Mathias Mnyampala and many others after him.¹¹⁴ Mnyampala's work in Ngonjera became so imposing that some have credited him as being the progenitor of the form. In the introduction to Mnyampala's Ngonjera za Ukuta, the then Prime Minister of Tanzania, Rashidi M. Kawawa wrote:

... Mr Mnyampala has discovered a very important form in the country ...¹¹⁵

A few support this view. Evidence shows, however, that Mnyampala was an innovator rather than a discoverer who utilized already available forms for new purposes. Dialogue-verse poems and songs were quite common in both traditional societies and in Kiswahili culture. Such peoples as the Wakaguru, Wapogoro, Wazaramo and Wanyakyusa have always utilized songs in dialogue form.¹¹⁶ There is also ample evidence that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ngonjera-type poetry was being used amongst the Kiswahili speakers of the coast. The famous Kiswahili poet Muyaka bin Haji al-Ghassany is credited as having written dialogue-verse poems.¹¹⁷ As early as 1946, a poem called Wali (Rice) appeared in Buku Bin Athman's 'Mashairi y Mambo Leo'. Mnyampala who had written many poems on social and religious issues

started writing Ngonjera before 1967.¹¹⁸ As early as 1964, Mnyampala was working with Primary School pupils in the production of Ngonjera. It was the Arusha Declaration, however, which gave him the inspiration to put Ngonjera at the service of the new political ideology. He was encouraged in this by Mwalimu Nyerere's call to poets to 'propagate the Arusha Declaration and praise our national culture'.¹¹⁹

Mnyampala's response was the production and writing of many Ngonjera most of which can be found in his Ngonjera za Ukuta volume 1 and 2.¹²⁰ What Mnyampala accomplished in this was to turn a form which had previously dealt with stories, historical as well as everyday events, into a form which focussed solely on politics and especially the Arusha Declaration and its objectives.

Using Ngonjera, Mnyampala described Ngonjera thus:

The roots of Ngonjera is to teach wisdom
 Important lessons to arouse ideas
 Of mental thoughts to bring about change
 The meaning of Ngonjera is teaching through poetry.¹²¹

Mnyampala insisted that Ngonjera should teach three things: the Arusha Declaration, general elements of national culture and proper usage of Kiswahili language. Moreover they must entertain:

If they (Ngonjera) have no lessons or do not have elements of entertainment ... they cannot be called Ngonjera.¹²²

Ngonjera as developed by Mnyampala and his followers, however, displays a form so rigid that it narrows and at times fails to meet all the prescriptions ascribed to it.

The Arusha Declaration and the Party are the dominant themes in Mnyampala's two books on Ngonjera. The titles in the first book

include: TANU and its Policy, Our Leaders, Ujamaa, The Arusha Declaration, Education and Culture, National Holidays, Good Relations and Riddles.¹²³ In book 2 can be found: The Party: TANU, The Policy of Ujamaa, Self Reliance, Membership, The Arusha Declaration.¹²⁴ The best example of Mnyampala's use of Ngonjera can be found in Book 2 where the whole Arusha Declaration is reproduced in Ngonjera form. The Arusha Declaration said for example:

A true socialist state is one in which all people are workers and in which neither capitalism nor feudalism exists. It does not have two classes of people, a lower class composed of people who work for their living, and an upper class of people who live on the work of others. In a really socialist country no person exploits another; everyone who is physically able to work does so.¹²⁵

The following are Mnyampala's verses on that paragraph:

A true socialist country
Is not a country of exploitation
It is a country of true workers
Everyman works to live

It does not have even two classes
A class of the exploited
And a class of the exploiters
Which has masters to be served

It is not a capitalist country
Nor does feudalism exist
To enrich some
And to oppress the others.

...

A true socialist country
Is for every able bodied man
A man does not exploit another
But works each for himself.¹²⁶

Mnyampala's Ngonjera can be divided into three groups according to the methods of delivery. First, there is the monologue Ngonjera in which

a single character recites or performs a speech. He, the character, addresses the audience and tells them of the virtues of a particular attitude or activity in order to persuade them directly. Secondly, there is the group of Ngonjera with more than one character but these are not in conflict. They develop their argument in agreement, supportive of each other. It is the third type of Ngonjera, however, which has become more familiar and been adopted by many Mnyampala followers. Two characters or more take two different attitudes to an issue and the argument is developed either through a question and answer technique or in the form of debates. The argument is almost always between one who knows or has the correct political attitude and one who is ignorant or holds a 'false' political viewpoint on an issue. In the end, the ignorant is always converted to the 'correct' side of the argument. In Mnyampala's 'Sielewi Azimio' (I don't understand the Declaration) a son asks his father what the Arusha Declaration is all about and the father enlightens him:

Son: 1. Please father, I ask you in your goodness
 I am still young, I don't understand much
 I have not understood the meaning, being new in the
 world
 The Arusha Declaration tell me so that I understand

Father: 6. The Good Declaration, has brought many things
 It did not discriminate for the man of good will
 But for the racists, the exploiting the capitalists
 The Arusha Declaration enriches the nation.¹²⁷

At the end of the lesson the son concludes:

12. Father, your son has heard the sweetness of the
 Declaration
 Now, I too declare, to move from the city
 And those oppressors will all be destroyed
 The Arusha Declaration enriches the nation. 128

Ngonjera at the outset did not only propagate issues and values contained within the Arusha Declaration but exuded a celebratory aura for the event. Arusha was seen as the end of exploitation, oppression and capitalist values and the inauguration of a socialist era. The call to adhere to its principles of Ujamaa living in Ngonjera was both propaganda and a celebration. Many others besides Mnyampala wrote Ngonjera in support of the Arusha Declaration; amongst them can be found J.K. Nyerere, Sheikh S.A. Kandoro, C. Yussuff Hokororo, E. Kezilahabi¹²⁹ and many members in educational institutions.

After the Arusha Declaration Ngonjera continued to be topical taking immediate political and social issues as its themes and tried to propagate the official attitude on such matters as education, national culture, liberation of Africa, work ethics and especially issues on Ujamaa living.

Even though Mnyampala wrote Ngonjera as poetry, he meant it to be dramatized on the stage. He went as far as to give advice concerning the deportment of the performers while acting out Ngonjera. He emphasized the need for appropriate gestures, movements and facial expressions as essential to Ngonjera performance.¹³⁰ It was Mnyampala's followers, however, who developed some of the dramatic features inherent in Ngonjera which were not exploited by Mnyampala. These were mainly four: the nature of the conflict in Ngonjera, characterization, its poetic nature and presentational techniques.

Ngonjera performance has been greatly influenced by its poetic element. Mnyampala's Ngonjera show an adherence to traditional

Kiswahili prosody which follow such poetic principles as metre, rhymes and accent. He commonly uses the quatrain stanza with between 8 and 20 syllables in each line. This produces particular rhythms in performance which are usually repetitious. The following stanza for example alternates between 15 and 16 syllables in each line:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
Ngon/je/ra ki/tu ga/ni, na/si/ki/a ki/la ma/ra

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Ya/ta/m/kwa mi/do/mo/ni, te/na mbe/le ya ha/dha/ra

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
Je ma/na ya/ke ni/ni, na/mi ni/pa/te bu/sa/ra

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 131
Ma/a/na ya/ke ngo/nje/ra, na/mbi/e na/mi ni/ju/e

Common also is the repeated refrain (in part or as a whole) at the end of each stanza. Different characters might carry different refrains according to their side of the argument. What some of Mnyampala's followers managed to develop was to free Ngonjera from the confinement of predictable rhythms. These abandoned the regular meter, even syllables or number of lines in each stanza. This is shown in E. Kezilahabi's 'Dakika 15 za Uzalendo' (Fifteen Minutes of Nationalism) where he breaks the traditional rhythms in the middle of the Ngonjera:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
Sa/sa Si/ki/a ya TA/NU, Ka/zi na ma/e/nde/le/o

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
A/zi/mi/o la A/ru/sha

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Je/shi la Ku/je/nga Ta/i/fa

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Ku/o/ndo/le/wa ko/di ya ki/chwa

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
 Ki/so/mo chawa/tu wa/zi/ma ...

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
 Mwo/ngo/zo wa TA/NU ku/tu/o/ngo/za

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 Ya A/na/sa ma/ga/ri ku/ka/ta/li/wa

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 132
 Na si/a/sa ni ki/li/mo

This trend to break the rhythmic patterns within Ngonjera is more in evidence in Ngonjera written after 1972. This development was taking place simultaneously with the development of Ngonjera as more of a performance art in characterization, conflict and presentation techniques. Mnyampala's Ngonjera hinted at a sense of conflict and provided no direction in either characterization or performance for each Ngonjera. Some of his followers, however, started to explore and use these more obviously so that by 1984, what distinguished Ngonjera from other dramatizations was the presence of poetry and bias towards official political attitudes. Stage directions for characters' behaviour, their social setting as well as incorporation of such items as songs and music have developed Ngonjera in a manner which has raised some objections amongst traditionalists.

During the early seventies, Ngonjera began to appear with such elements as stage directions, settings and some definite characterizations. This can be found in such Ngonjera as Kezilahabi's 'Dakika 15 za Uzalendo'¹³³, Muhando's 'Umoja ni Nguvu' (Unity is Strength)¹³⁴, Kamba's 'TANU Imetenda Kazi' (TANU has Done Work) and Mbunda's and Mkulia's 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' (Ujamaa Villages).¹³⁵ There was in some

of these an introduction of characters who perform the function of a narrator, an element not present in Mnyampala's works. Political songs and meetings become important features in Ngonjera performances. The debates also become livelier as comedic elements appear and more resistance to political conversion becomes part of those who are ignorant or hard headed. The Ngonjera 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' exemplifies the trend towards a more dramatic form.

'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' is divided up into six scenes of three acts. The theme is about the call to live in Ujamaa villages. In the first act, a village caller informs everyone, through the drum and Ngonjera verse, about an important meeting which is about to take place. The second act covers the meeting where a politician explains to the villagers the need to move into Ujamaa villages for economic and social reasons. While most of those present respond favourably to the politicians' words, there is one man who resists the move. In the third act, all the villagers have moved except the one man. He is, however, persuaded by his wife to go and visit the new village where economic and social developments impress him enough to abandon his earlier attitude. This theme, as we shall see later, became quite a favourite not only in Ngonjera but also in many improvised plays and Vichekesho. ¹³⁶

While the Ngonjera still relied on Mnyampala's verse structure, the characterizations, conflicts and the setting for the situations became more obvious. Such long directions as can be found in 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' tended to ensure that the performers acted out the Ngonjera

more than Mnyampala had envisioned.¹³⁷ The slight resistance against official policy is also strengthened by making those who oppose it not only ask what it is all about but give personal reasons for their obstinacy to change:

Mbishi: I have my own house, I have a plantation
 Living together means witchcraft so I refuse to join
 My own small house gives enough protection
 Why should I start wandering here and there?¹³⁸

The strong Ngonjera rhythms are broken by the inclusion of such devices as songs, political slogans, realistic responses like clapping and ululation as well as the uneven length of each stanza.

In a piece entitled 'Ngonjera'¹³⁹, Mulokozi shows the possibility of developing the issue under discussion through action built in the dramatic mould. A peasant and his wife encounter a young man sitting bored and hungry by a roadside. The peasant addresses him:

You, don't loiter if you are wise
 Tis not an honourable thing, sleep if you are ill
 To squat like a monkey and to continue squatting
 That is no yawn I say, but hunger that troubles you.

The young man thinks that his primary education entitles him to a better life than working on the land as suggested by the peasant:

I shall get a good job with plenty of money
 I shall wear silk and grow a big stomach
 I shall shine like the stars
 I shall eat plenty and fatty foods
 I cannot lower myself, to settle in a village.¹⁴⁰

and / While the discussion between the peasant / the young man continues, a rich man looking for casual workers appears and offers the young man a job. The latter jumps at the opportunity with enthusiasm urged on by the rich man's sweet words:

I am a man of justice like the exemplary angels
 I am well praised
 I am your friend, like a sister and brother you are,
 You shall receive every month the wage you deserve.¹⁴¹

When the 'deserved wage' is revealed, however, the young man is shocked to find out how low it is. He realizes that taking the job will not fulfil his dreams but put him in a situation of exploitation. He opts to follow the peasant and his wife. By the use of simple actions through which both the arguments and the choices are made, Mulokozi manages to rescue Ngonjera from a dependence on persuasion through words only.

Another writer whose Ngonjera work carries a strong sense of action is Abdilatif Abdalla, a Kenyan poet but due to political reasons he was forced to live in Tanzania for many years. In 1970, he wrote a piece titled 'Mnazi: Vuta N'kuvute' (The Palm Tree: Pull Me I shall pull you).¹⁴² This Ngonjera incorporates the action within the verses and it was one of the few Ngonjera to appear in the early seventies which used a metaphorical rather than realistic approach to topical issues. 'Mnazi' portrays two people, one on top of a coconut tree and the other standing on the ground arguing. The one at the bottom, Alii, calls to the one on top, Badi, to come down. The first two stanzas of the Ngonjera provide both the setting and the conflict.

Alii: You Nḡugu up the coconut tree, you seek evil from me
 I tell you to climb down, categorically you refuse
 You have made up there home, comfortably you sit
 Will you come down or not?

Badi: Nḡugu under the coconut tree, I answer you from up here
 What you tell me is all nonsense friend
 I cannot climb down without knowing the reason
 That is my answer.¹⁴³

As the argument develops through the Ngonjera, the source of the conflict between Alii and Badi emerges and is then elaborated. The conflict is familiar. Alii and Badi represent the two groups of post independence Africa - those who have benefited at the expense of others and have climbed on top, and those left behind at the bottom of the economic and social ladder. Alii and those he represents, however, are shown to have realized their situation and are sending a warning to those up the tree.

Alii: ... Even though I have to tolerate you
 I'll be tired one day to be patient any longer
 What will happen to you then will harm you badly
 That I swear to you.¹⁴⁴

The argument is not resolved but ends with this threatening note from Alii who sees the day of reckoning for those up the tree as approaching fast. Throughout the Ngonjera, Abdalla provides words and lines which indicate emotional and physical attitudes, character activity, different paces for the different sections of the Ngonjera as well as information on the characters and the issue which is being argued. It is due to some of these elements and the fact that there is no resolution at the end of the argument that Abdalla's work departs from Mnyampala's approach to Ngonjera although, Abdalla like Mnyampala, adheres to the traditional rhythmic patterns of the form.

Over the years Ngonjera has also developed from being a form requiring 10 - 15 minutes for performance to a longer form taking sometimes hours of performance time. Good examples are some Ngonjera performed for the radio. Serialized Ngonjera has become a common feature and some works have taken up to 15 quarter-hour instalments.¹⁴⁵

Stage Ngonjera is relatively shorter and usually does not exceed 45 minutes. This development in longer Ngonjera can be attributed to writers and producers paying much more attention to details concerning thematic content, characterization, action, the setting and its atmosphere. There has also been a recent tendency to include in Ngonjera elements which provide background information to the issues under argument and make several topics rather than one the centre of Ngonjera arguments. These developments in Ngonjera can be found in such recent works as 'Nipe Habari' (Give me News or What is Happening).¹⁴⁶

'Nipe Habari' differs from 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' in that it tries to tackle several issues within a single Ngonjera, a not uncommon characteristic of Ngonjera in the early eighties. Four issues are dealt with in 'Nipe Habari': The Party, the Tanzanian economic situation, the intended resignation of J.K. Nyerere from the Presidency and the call for every able bodied person to engage in productive work. As in 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa', 'Nipe Habari' has several scenes including one taking place in a political meeting where all the four issues are discussed. Again, songs, unpoetic responses, humour, a narrator, dance, and characterization form part of the dramatization. Much attention is given to the social background of the characters and the political and social atmosphere under which the topics are debated. Elements of humour have been incorporated to enliven the occasion and give some characters a distinctive comedic element. 'Nipe Habari' is a long Ngonjera taking up to 45 minutes of live performance time and at least half an hour on the radio.



Figure 15



Figure 16

Figures 15 & 16: Ngonjera performances, Cultural Competitions, DSM, 1984.

In spite of these developments, however, Ngonjera has retained two important features: its capacity to be always topical and its strong bias for official political propaganda. While Ngonjera's topicality has been seen to be a positive and distinctive feature of Ngonjera which is essential to its development, Ngonjera's approach to the issues has produced both supporters and critics. The critics of Ngonjera have seen its affiliation with official political propaganda as limiting. They have argued that Mnyampala and his followers have done a disservice to themselves as poets and to the political organs whose spokesmen they have chosen to become. Ngonjera, they argue, has taken political 'parroting' to the extreme, forgetting in the process to interpret and analyze the issues. Abdilatif Abdalla has been one such critic and his comment speaks for many others:

It does not benefit a poet to compose works which have no other function except to be the loud speaker of things done or said in his country or to praise and to agree with everything which is said and done; a country is not built by hypocrisy but it gets lost by hypocrisy.¹⁴⁸

This argument stems from the belief that commitment to a political ideology does not exclude an analysis of that ideology or acknowledgment of mistakes resulting from its practice. In this, the critics are agreeing with Lenin that the attitudes of members towards mistakes of their political party is one way of judging how that political party and the members fulfil their obligation to themselves and the working people.¹⁴⁹ This attitude has been found to be missing in Mnyampala's works (Mnyampala was a party member) and many Ngonjera producers. The supporters of Ngonjera, however, have dismissed such criticisms and

have pointed out that Ngonjera has been a true socialist vehicle and its approach has been not only necessary but revolutionary. Mulokozi has been one such typical supporter and has said:

Swahili poetry has been turned into an effective tool of socialist propaganda and education by such prominent poets as the late Mathias Mnyampala ... It is precisely because of this nature of Swahili poetry as a tool of social mobilisation and revolution that certain reactionary 'specialists' have incessantly accused it of being too didactic, too topical, too 'committed' and dangerously subordinate to social and political upheavals. It is easy to understand the attitude of such people coming as they all do, from a background of capitalist decadent values ...¹⁵⁰

This attitude typifies the mood of the late sixties and early seventies where Ngonjera was seen as an indigenous form which should not be evaluated using Western poetic and dramatic models. It also shows an aggressive support of Ujamaa and its ideals which needed to be propagated and supported rather than analyzed. Ngonjera's unambiguous and didactic approach to politics was seen as an ideal tool for propaganda. The supporters of Ngonjera, however, have probably been too defensive. A call for a more critical appraisal of political issues is neither reactionary nor capitalistic. Positive ideological commitment is not blind to the contradictions and upheavals of social reality. What Ngonjera did right after 1967 can be defended as being right and necessary for that time. But to contain Ngonjera in a rigid formula (either aesthetically or ideologically) as reality and issues become complex is to minimise the form's potential.

The development of Ngonjera since 1967 has also been affected by the type of participants involved in producing Ngonjera. The educated élite, politicians and writers joined school children, workers and

cultural troupe members to produce Ngonjera which were performed on the radio and any available performance space. (President Nyerere himself is accredited with having written some Ngonjera-like poems.)¹⁵¹ At the University of Dar-es-Salaam, students and staff were quite active in Ngonjera and gave their support to the form in theory and practice.¹⁵² By the mid seventies, however, many of these Ngonjera supporters had ceased to actively participate in either writing or performing Ngonjera. No Ngonjera has been written or performed by either students or staff of the University of Dar-es-Salaam since 1976. The major contributions of Ngonjera since that date have come from either school children or members of cultural troupes who are workers or peasants. The withdrawal of some of the earlier participants from producing Ngonjera has meant that its recent development has been in the hands of people who find it easier to use elements of Ngonjera in their handed down forms rather than experiment with them. Since 1980, Ngonjera has also been a major element in cultural competitions. The Ministry responsible for culture which sponsors the competitions has encouraged the use of Ngonjera in its conventional form. This has made groups shy away from experimentation for fear of losing points in the competitions. The guidelines for the competitions ensures also that the topics chosen are portrayed in ways which support whatever current official pronouncements. During the 1983/84 zonal and national competitions, for example, all the Ngonjera presented were on 'Nguvu Kazi' - the directive that all able bodied persons must work - and racketeering.¹⁵³ With the exception of two cases, all the Ngonjera were conventional in form and content.

Even with the exceptional cases, the departures from conventions were tentative rather than definite. In Morogoro, one Ngonjera showed at least one person who is a 'resister' to the government policy on Nguvu Kazi remaining unconverted until the end. This put a small dent to the well rounded nature of conventional Ngonjera where everyone in the end is converted to uphold whatever policy is under debate. In Dar-es-Salaam, one Ngonjera about racketeering showed the character busy stashing away bribe money while enthusiastically singing the Party Song. In both cases the experimental gestures were small and were meant to produce a comic effect rather than pose a challenge to the major conventions of Ngonjera. These were, nevertheless, gestures which some Ngonjera traditionalists did not look upon with favour.¹⁵⁴

The withdrawal of some of those who were earlier active in producing Ngonjera occurred at a time when reflection and critical analysis of the events after Arusha was beginning to pick up momentum. Plays began to appear which reflected this reality. That Ngonjera was abandoned at this time points to two factors: either the form was seen to be too identifiable with the post-Arusha euphoria and thus to use it was to arouse particular ideological expectations, or the form was seen as incapable of portraying issues in as complex a manner as some people were beginning to see the Tanzanian political reality was. Ngonjera was one theatre form in which the alignment between politicians and writers as well as performers was clearly demonstrated. That the educated élite, writers and some performers have stopped composing and performing Ngonjera is an event which points to the break up of that

alignment in some ways. In spite of this, however, writers and composers have continued to use Ngonjera in a limited way. It is not unusual to find verse dialogue scenarios or songs in some plays produced in the late seventies and early eighties. Ngonjera features in such plays as Penina Muhando's Lina Ubani, Paukwa Theatre Group's Ayubu and Emmanuel Mbogo's Giza Limeingia.¹⁵⁵ Within these, Ngonjera has become part of compositions which incorporate mixed theatrical forms and cannot therefore claim primacy above the others.

Amongst the groups which have continued to use Ngonjera throughout the period have been the cultural troupes. But besides Ngonjera, the most important contribution of these troupes to the theatre scene in Tanzania has been improvised plays and comedies. The following section looks at these plays and the groups which have been actively producing them.

5. Cultural Troupes and Improvised Plays

The growth and use of Ngonjera in the period after the Arusha Declaration contributed to a theatre atmosphere which was not only political but also, often, biased for the official ideological aspirations. This atmosphere was heightened by the development of theatre activities carried out by organized cultural troupes all over the country.¹⁵⁶ Besides such activities as Ngonjera, dance, musical and song performances, these groups created and performed many improvisational plays. These plays have differed from the published

plays by the fact that they take a shorter time to devise, they have been performed by peasants and workers and have been much more topical than the other devised or written plays. Both their process of creation and performance have been informal. The presentations have been simple with minimum or no stage sets, props or scenery. They have been performed anywhere from village compounds to proscenium stages. Rehearsals have been minimal and at time non-existent. Besides their informality and flexibility these plays have two major other characteristics: they have displayed a strong alignment with the political and social issues after Arusha and have a strong comedic bias. The tendency to favour comedic elements or play for laughs has endowed the plays with the collective name of Vichekesho. This has been irrespective of the nature of the content and the performance objectives.

The improvisational approach used in Vichekesho is similar to that used in such forms as Commedia dell'Arte popular in 15th and 16th century Italy and France.¹⁵⁷ Where scripts exist, they do so only in outline form. The performers involved improvise the dialogue, develop the situation and characterization. Where Vichekesho are performed by groups engaged in syncretic performances, there is usually a core of members who are responsible for the improvisations. The other members of the group are assigned roles when need arises. There is then a rapport created amongst the core group members which plays a big part in the plays that take a very short period to prepare or no time at all. Instances when a scenario has been performed for the first time

without any preparations are not uncommon. Each of the participating members is free to bring scenario ideas but sometimes there is one member assigned to take the responsibility. The ideas for the scenarios are inspired by two main sources. The commonest source is the topical issues of the times. This has been dominated by political pronouncements, slogans or campaigns on such issues as education, health, villagization, work ethics, afforestation and agriculture. The second source has been scenarios enacted by other groups or contained within existing published plays which are adapted to suit the intentions of the groups. Supplementing these topical sources, scenario ideas have been engendered by behaviour or activities which have been general in nature and whose performances aim more for entertainment than didacticism. Within each group, also, a popular scenario has been the source of others within the repertoire. One group in Dar-es-Salaam, for example, had in June 1984, 250 improvised plays.¹⁵⁸ On closer examination, however, most were found to be variations of other scenarios. The changes in thematic focus or characterization are sometimes so small that they appear to be repetitions of each other. The 250 plays are in actual fact variations of 25 major themes or scenarios. Even in groups with few plays in their repertoire, a similar method of reworking familiar themes or scenarios to create new ones is used.

The plots of the improvised scenarios are usually thin and straightforward as can be seen in the examples given in Appendix B. The beginning and the end are linked by a development or aggravation of

a problem or complication. The larger part of the play usually devotes itself to this middle part. A resolution is effected by either reversing the situation established at the beginning or making the protagonist flounder further in the complication. This progression follows characterizations which depend much on the presence or absence of particular attitudes or beliefs. The arrival at a resolution depends on whether a change of attitude has taken place. This is especially common in improvised plays dealing with topical issues of political importance. In the case of plays on literacy, good health or villagization, for example, it is the particular attitudes in the protagonists which either put them into trouble or save them.¹⁵⁹ The aim in these is to discourage certain attitudes seen as socially, economically or politically destructive. The plays then support attitudes which have been officially prescribed as socially or politically constructive. One of the ways in which the plays have directed the audience to reject or accept particular attitudes or behaviour is by using comedic elements especially ridicule.

It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that Vichekesho during the colonial era were characterized by an approach which ridiculed African cultural patterns and way of life. After independence, ridicule in improvised plays took a different direction. Western patterns of behaviour amongst Africans were ridiculed and favour was directed towards African and nationalist attitudes and behaviour. The Arusha Declaration introduced other areas in which ridicule was directed - anti-Ujamaa and anti-developmental attitudes. Laughter was directed

towards the exploiters, big and small, racketeers, corrupters, resisters to Ujamaa and villagization, those who cling to illiteracy and unprogressive traditional beliefs and many more.¹⁶⁰

Besides ridicule, the improvised plays use the device of pitting wits of one individual or group against another. This is especially used in plays which aim at entertainment first and pedagogy second. In The Radio, for example, the quick wits of the wife are pitted against the slow wits of the husband.¹⁶¹ The device can also be found in plays where robbers, racketeers and cheats are given advantage in their actions against the honest or committed people. Rather than ridicule, these plays aim at a moral. The culprits or the quick witted are usually engaged in anti-social behaviour and they are always caught, unmasked or brought to justice. So, variously the plays contain the traditional moral adages of 'crime does not pay', 'a robber has only forty days', 'look before you leap', 'justice has many legs', etc.

Even though disguise and slapstick are used in Vichekesho, these have been heavily overshadowed by comedic speech. The evocation of laughter has depended much on comedic dialogue exchanges rather than a comedic situation. There are many variations of plays where characters are in situations which are not funny. For example, individuals who marry each other without knowing that they are related are not in a comedic situation. It is made such through the witty exchanges and the performers' continual attempt to play for laughs. This characteristic has given some performers and certain characters they play their popularity. There are no stock characters or masks in

these improvised plays.¹⁶² But certain characters played by the same performers have become a popular feature. For example, the old man who refuses to move to an Ujamaa village can be seen in plays dealing with corruption or racketeering. One group in Dar-es-Salaam has named him Mzee Vumbi and he features in many of their scenarios played usually by the same performers.¹⁶³ The performers have popularized this character through his speeches which are full of wit.

The performance style of the improvised plays is usually broad with the images and the characters painted in their bold colours. In characterization, setting, gesture, costume and movement, the performers don't worry about detailed contradictions but only the essentials which contribute to the main objectives. Contradictions which affect periphery elements are also a matter of no concern. The statements which the plays project, therefore, are direct. This is more so because the retention of dramatic tension in the plays is never a primary concern. The moral, social or political statements are, therefore, achieved through a style which greatly reduces dramatic tension but calls attention to the elements in opposition. The exaggerations which are part of the comedic approach of the performances become then a major focus in highlighting the oppositional elements.

The domination of comedic elements and the performers' continual attempts at evoking laughter has aroused mixed feelings amongst the observers of improvised plays. First of all, there is a recognition that these plays have an important part to play in theatre development.



Figure 17: Vichekesho, The Bank, Muungano CT, DSM, 1984.



Figure 18: Dramatized poetry, Sayari CT, DSM, 1984.

This is primarily because of their improvisational approach. But their tendency towards comedy is seen as a factor which makes them frivolous and not serious. Their development as serious theatre is usually seen as lying outside their comedic approach. In 1980, P.O. Mlama stated:

... Vichekesho have certain elements which are beneficial to the development of drama. The most important of these is that freedom of immediate creation.¹⁶⁴

Earlier in 1973, J. Mollel said even more emphatically:

Vichekesho can form a dramatic basis for serious improvisation [but] this basis has not been explored. Any reform to be done to improvisation cannot be done within the context of Vichekesho.¹⁶⁵

Both these statements circumvent and ignore the possibility of improvised plays developing into serious drama within the context of comedy. There is an assumption that comedy cannot be 'serious drama'. And yet comedy which takes itself seriously can present dialectics in situations that other 'serious drama' cannot. Instead of discouraging comedy, theatre practitioners might look at comedy's elements which can be used to powerful effect. Comedy's reliance on developing through illogical rather than logical factors, its distance from reality and its effect at suspending emotions and challenging the intellect are elements which can be developed in Vichekesho. The objections which their present state arouses can be due to the fact that they appear too naive and sometimes the comedy works against some of the political and social objectives of the themes. This is primarily true in those improvised plays where an attempted seriousness in the theme or situation is contradicted (negatively) by the comedic speeches. If

there is a complaint about the improvised plays as comedy, it is the fact that they have not been inventive enough and have remained too close to reality and realism. Their contribution to theatre development might lie in their possibility of translating reality into spectacles which expose its madness and contradictions. They can do this by pushing further the sense of ridiculousness, satire, irony and incongruity - powerful sources of comedy.

But changes can be expected to occur in improvised plays not only as they continue to respond to topical issues but also as they respond to factors affecting their production. Three of these factors have already had an impact on the performances of these plays: 1) the nature and organization of the groups which perform them; 2) the rise of commercialism in theatre since the late seventies and 3) the incorporation of technological devices in the performances.

There have been two types of organized cultural troupes since 1967. There have been first of all groups which specialize in particular forms of dance or music such as taarab and the various traditional dances and music. Prior to 1967, improvised plays were performed by some taarab groups and a few workers' groups such as Urafiki and Tanganyika Textiles.¹⁶⁶ It has been the rapid growth of workers' and independent groups with no focus on any particular form of performance which has increased both the popularity and quantity of improvised plays after the Arusha Declaration.

Out of the 28 groups interviewed in Dar-es-Salaam, who were active in performing Vichekesho in 1984, only two were founded before

1967.¹⁶⁷ The call to preserve and promote traditional culture after Arusha resulted in many cultural groups being organized in factories, parastatal organizations, the army, villages and by private individuals. While traditional dances, music, recitations and dance dramas were the initial elements contained in repertoires of most groups, acrobatics, taarab, choir songs and improvised plays were eventually added to these syncretic performances. Because of the composite nature of the performances, improvised plays were initially short, lasting from anywhere between 15 minutes to half an hour. This, however, has been changing. Improvised plays have become longer. A performance of The Bank (see Appendix B, no.10) ran over two hours and one on education and literacy ran an hour when seen in 1984.¹⁶⁸ This situation has developed partly because of the growing popularity of these plays. The most important factor here, however, has been the growth of groups who engage in the performances full time and have become professional. These groups have had the time to perform and rehearse more. Such groups as the popular Muungano, DDC Kibisa, JKT Mgulani and the army cultural group in Lugalo are amongst these. Investigation has revealed that these groups have spent between 20 and 30 hours a week in rehearsals compared to the others which have spent only between two and eight hours a week.¹⁶⁹ This rehearsal time has affected both the length of the plays and introduced more preparedness in the improvised plays.

The length, frequency and nature of performance of improvised plays has also been affected in recent years by the rise of commercialism

of cultural activities. This has manifested itself in the opening up of performance venues by private and institutional entrepreneurs - a phenomenon which has gained popularity especially in the urban areas beginning in the late seventies. Cultural performances in beer halls, for example, were rare before that time but these have become some of the most popular venues by 1984. There is great competition amongst the beer hall owners in engaging the most popular groups of syncretic performers. In some of these halls performances occur every day to several times a week. Such performances last between two and four hours in which improvised plays claim a large share. The popular groups are not only performing more frequently in longer plays but they are also forced to change their repertoire more frequently. The quantity of DDC Kibisa's improvised plays (claimed at 250) can be seen as a result of its holding performances every day. The owners of the halls, however, do not necessarily have aesthetic or political objectives in opening up performance venues. They have seen them as attractions for more customers and propagandistic tools for their activities. Performances, especially those on Sundays and Saturdays are held during the daytime to allow families to attend. Moreover, specific improvised plays have been commissioned to popularize the owners' activities. Two improvised plays performed in 1984, for example, tried to propagandize the activities of the National Bank and the Dar-es-Salaam District Council.¹⁷⁰ Both of these were performed in beer halls owned by the respective institutions. There has also been a growing tendency to prefer improvised plays which are not

overtly didactic but 'entertain' more. 'Who wants to be hammered on the head with political sloganeering while drinking one's beer' can be the explanation behind it. Politics, nevertheless, still dominate the performances.

Besides the hall owners, the cultural groups themselves have recognized that their performances are a great potential for income. Free performances have become rare while gate fees have risen and been institutionalized. This growing commercialism has aroused official concern. Opening a conference of the Party Youth Organization, the Party General Secretary condemned the practice on March 15, 1984. He pointed out that commercialization of cultural activities was not only contrary to Tanzanian culture but socialism as well.¹⁷¹ He left it to the Youth Organization to point out the reasons for the development of commercialism in culture. The organization outlined two reasons: the failure of official organs to oversee the activities which have been hijacked by individuals and the failure of the activities to align themselves with political conscientization.¹⁷² These reasons, however, mystify and overlook two elements in this development. Commercialization has not been undertaken by individuals alone. Some of the most active groups which sell their performances have been those belonging to official institutions or receiving strong moral and material support from official sources. DDC Kibisa, Bora, Muungano and Magereza are some of these groups. The fact that commercialization took root in the late seventies and accelerated in the eighties is no coincidence either. The harsh economic realities of this period

forced some people to look for alternative sources of income and others to exploit the situation and accumulate more wealth. Theatre performances provided one of the means.

One good example which can be linked to the economic realities of the times is the opening up of the beer halls as performance areas. While many companies and institutions were facing difficulties, the Tanzanian Breweries had relative success in maintaining production. Investment in areas of beer consumption became safer than in other areas and this caused not only old beer halls to expand but also new ones to open. Cultural performances became part of this development. The cultural groups themselves were also responding to the economic situation and the minimal official support by selling their performances as a form of 'self-reliance'.

The official accusation that syncretic and composite performances have not been pre-occupied with conscientization has been contradicted by observers and the performances themselves. If the accusation was directed towards the impact and effect of the performances as conscientizing agents, then it might find favour amongst those who have been worried about the conscientizing approaches of the performances. But the accusation is directed towards elements of a political nature within the performances. As such, evidence contradicts this observation. Even though there has been a shift towards an increased number of improvised plays which are more 'entertaining', for example, these have been performed with other items which have been overtly political. A non political play such as The Radio is sandwiched between songs and

dances which take their material from political slogans, speeches or issues. While the choreography of traditional dances has retained the traditional steps, gestures and rhythms, the songs accompanying the dances have acquired new political lyrics using the old tunes. In such a performance milieu, anything non-political is minimized.¹⁷³

As recently as January 1984, one observer of performances by cultural troupes complained about their 'lack of vitality' which he attributed to too much emphasis on politics and 'lack of imagination'.¹⁷⁴

The most popular theme for our performing artists is by far 'politics'. There is a lot of name dropping and statements/policies delivered recently by politicians form the subject matter of songs, 'ngoma' dances and quite a few dramas.¹⁷⁵

When considering the political content of the troupes' performances, the complaints of the politicians seem to be unfounded. There has been much more agreement, however, on the need to develop the way that the content, political or otherwise, has been handled within the theatre events.¹⁷⁶

Another factor which has contributed to changes within improvised plays has been the increased use of technological devices. Such items as microphones, loud speakers and taping machines have increasingly become popular in performances. These have affected performance elements like movement, acting, performer-audience relationships and some aspects of improvisation. The efforts of performers to reach out and be heard has been curtailed by microphones. Instead of big vocal gestures, the performers can use small and subtle voice patterns. Movement becomes also tailored to conform with the use of devices. The choices as to when to move, or sit down, or how far the performers

are from each other are being dictated not by aesthetic consideration but by the accessibility of the devices. Some of the groups have replaced improvised music and sounds in the plays with taped music and sounds. For groups which own and use these devices, choices of venues for performances have been linked to accessibility of power sources for the devices. Where electricity or batteries are not available certain plays cannot be performed or have to be replaced by others. The flexibility of improvised plays in such a situation is being affected.

Future changes in improvised plays can also be expected to occur because of one additional factor - the rising consciousness amongst the groups regarding their needs and nature of their work. When representatives of 14 groups met for a workshop in Dar-es-Salaam in 1983, they expressed amongst other things: the need to organize themselves into a national organization to safeguard their interests; the need to have access to training facilities and other theatrical forms; and a more conscious effort to develop theatre in its aesthetics and social function.¹⁷⁷ During the workshop, steps began to be taken to organize a performers' national organization. Activities and performance approaches which featured in the workshop (e.g. mime, dance-drama) were adopted by some groups almost immediately after. If cross-fertilization between groups which perform improvised plays and those who use a more formal method continue, changes in the aesthetics of these plays will no doubt take place. Similarly, any development in the groups' desire to create a forum for themselves to safeguard their interests and direct their activities will become a

factor in the performances. One of the changes which might be expected to result from this is the relationship between the groups and political functionaries in the country. Since the Arusha Declaration, some of the cultural groups have been actively used by national and regional politicians to display 'Tanzanian Culture' in a manner which the groups have expressed as amounting to 'political exploitation'. They have had to perform not only to celebrate visits of political leaders in many parts of the country, but they have been also the exponents of 'airport culture'.¹⁷⁸ During the above-mentioned workshop, members of these groups complained that politicians have cared little for the artists' working conditions or the creative process of their work. Orders for performances have, more often than not, been given at short notice accompanied by impossible demands and insensitivity. These factors, they felt, affected the quality of their work. At the same time, however, they felt they had to obey the politicians' orders because of fear of repercussions if they did not comply. Continued political favour was seen as necessary for their survival. If the cultural troupes do manage to organize and resist some of the politicians' manipulations, then the performances will no doubt reflect changes in types of venues as well as in the qualitative nature of the elements used.

The above factors, however, are for possible future developments. In the meantime, the period between 1967 and 1984 has witnessed the growth of cultural troupes and their activities as a major component of the Tanzanian theatre scene. Such activities as the improvised

plays produced by the groups have, for the main part, remained supportive of Tanzania's socialist and nationalistic ideals throughout the period. Even when the issues in the plays have been general, the groups have avoided including anything that might challenge or question the status quo. Mzee Mwinamila and his group have been the exception but the greatest critical challenge to the events after Arusha has come not through the short improvised plays or groups of composite performances, but from published and long devised plays of mostly established writers and performers.

6. Disillusionment, Protest and a New Revolution

In some of the plays already discussed there were allusions to problems likely to exist and develop within the socialist structures of Ujamaa. Veiled and indirect references to the problems can be found in such plays as Arusi, Nuru Mpya and Jogoo Kijijini. A more direct approach has been taken by such works as Kijiji Chetu and The Canker. But the problems in these plays are portrayed with the underlying belief that the solutions to the problems lie with the established Ujamaa organization. The general tone of these plays is that Ujamaa will triumph no matter what the obstacles are.¹⁷⁹ By 1976, however, plays began to appear which took a more critical look at the experiences after the Arusha Declaration. The reference to Arusha and the exposition of problems became more direct. The general tone of the plays became more pessimistic and displayed a growing belief that the problems and contradictions which have cropped up since Arusha, or have

continued to exist in spite of Arusha, have been too great to allow Ujamaa to be attained. The exposition of problems since 1967 is, therefore, more aggressive in these plays and their emergence points to a period of sobering up and self evaluation of Tanzania's transition towards socialism. They mark an end to the nationalistic euphoria which characterized the earlier period. In spite of the impatience and disillusionment they show for Ujamaa, these plays do not advocate for any other system of social organization except socialism. Some advocate a new revolution in which the peasants and the workers will exercise their power and build a truer socialism. The political, economic and social structures developed since 1967 are shown to have denied the people this power and the defects they contain are too pronounced to build a viable socialism. These plays, however, display one dominant feature found in some of the earlier plays. The problems, conflicts and contradictions are developed within the major theme of liberation and the continuing struggle to effect it politically, economically and socially. It is a theme which can be found in, amongst others, Harakati za Ukombozi (The Struggles for Independence)¹⁸⁰, Ayubu (Job)¹⁸¹, Nguzo Mama (The Main Pillar)¹⁸², Lina Ubani (It Has Incense)¹⁸³, Kilio Kisimani (A Cry at the Well)¹⁸⁴ and Kaputula La Marx (The Shorts of Marx).¹⁸⁵ All these were written or produced between 1977 and 1984.

Harakati za Ukombozi tries to unfold the history of Tanzania as a process of resolving conflicts and contradictions. The play is developed through a Ngonjera type debate in which two groups argue about

historical events, their causes and the resolution of conflicts within the events. The argument is carried out between a group of young people on one hand and an old man on the other. The young people are full of vigour, enthusiasm and revolutionary idealism. The old man is sceptical. Between them, each episode in history is shown to be the result of resolving certain conflicts prior to it and in turn contributing new conflicts and contradictions which result in future events. Tanzania's history is shown as a dialectical process containing in each period positive and negative elements which act as forces in its development.

At the beginning of the play four youths are dancing and posturing their resolve to build the nation and effect the needed revolution for development. They claim to be ideologically conscious and their motto is taken from a paragraph of the Arusha Declaration:

We have been oppressed a great deal, we have been exploited a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now we want a revolution. 186

They resolve to bring about the revolution without fear or intimidation and boast:

We are the breakers of bombs
The heat that melts iron
We are the magnets,
Revolutionary magnets
We are the youth of Tanzania 187
We shall bring the revolution.

The old man is not impressed. He says that he has heard the tune too often before. To prove his point, he takes the youth back into history to see what happened there. A scenario about the period of slavery is

enacted. The buying and selling of slaves is shown to underline its economic objectives but this ends when the slaves are liberated. When, however, the Arab slaver takes to his heels, the liberated natives find themselves caught up in a vicious colonialism perpetuated by their liberators. In this, the old man points to the fact that while the liberation from slavery could be called a positive factor, it nevertheless contained a contradiction within it unleashed by its attainment. While conceding this point, the young people, however point to the strength of the nationalist movement against colonialism and the success that followed after independence and the Arusha Declaration. These events are celebrated by dances, demonstrations and much political rhetoric. The old man, however, points out the entrenchment of class contradictions resulting from these events. Contrasting scenarios are used to underline the contradictions. Right after independence a politician addresses the people:

... First of all we have to thank the Party leaders and our own efforts for chasing away the honey thief from the hive. Now all the honey is ours ... And we have started to witness the fruits of our independence. And some of us have already tasted them. So ... let us work together to protect our independence. There is no need for anxiety because everything now is ours.¹⁸⁸

After delivering this speech the politician moves on to inspect his businesses and farms where his exploitative and oppressive practices contrast with the words just uttered.¹⁸⁹ A similar device is used to contrast events after Arusha which are summed up in the old man's verse:

They worshipped the Declaration with dances and ululations
 They celebrated it
 But now they are betraying it and killing it with new tactics.¹⁹⁰

Another politician addresses an audience during the celebrations for Arusha:

... The Arusha Declaration was passed so that instead of a few enjoying the fruits produced by many, we can all enjoy them. So fellow countrymen, you can see that the Arusha Declaration is a light, the lamp which will expose all the faults of implementation. There are still faults. They remain hidden. So we shall expose and see them ...¹⁹¹

The Declaration will not only expose but eliminate completely all exploitation and build Ujamaa. Right after this, however, the politician is seen conniving with his friends on how to circumvent Arusha and benefit from it. It was declared in the Arusha Declaration, for example, that 'no TANU or Government leader should own houses which he rents to others'.¹⁹² The politician in the play has ten houses registered under his children and relatives' names and thus continues to be a landlord and contravenes the leadership code. This is a reflection of a situation which was quite common in real life. The greediness and selfishness of certain leaders after independence and the Arusha Declaration are summed up in a character in the play called 'The Sins of Freedom'. He provides both a comment and a symbol on post independence and Arusha exploitation, which has widened the gap between the people and their leaders:

... I arouse you through Independence and unity as the false name for benefits for all
But the fruits of independence are mine
I eat on your behalf.¹⁹³

The character boasts of the success of his clique at hoodwinking the masses to work harder to sustain the way of life of the leadership. Political rhetoric is made a way of paving for economic exploitation.

The young people, however, see the birth of the new party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM - The Revolutionary Party) as another step to end the evils unleashed by independence and events after 1967. But as the youths celebrate CCM, the old man remains sceptical and comments:

The new generation has decided to act,
 Give them space.
 But the new vessel exists in the same environment.
 The stumps have not been uprooted - and the buyer for the tools
 to uproot the stumps remains the same,
 The new generation is directed towards the same current;
 The new generation sings the same songs; 194
 Those who clap remain in the same circumstances.

The problem, the old man points out, has been the failure to effect economic and social change. The birth of CCM will not bring this social and economic change as long as it is old wine in new bottles. He is not totally convinced when at the end of the play the youths drag him to celebrate with them a new era of revolutionary fervour.

The play is a musical dance drama devised through improvisations of dramatic scenarios and traditional popular forms. Narratives, poetry, recitations and dialogue are intercepted by music, songs and dances. The style is epic with the cause and effects lying within a historical connection rather than the inward progression of the characters and situations. For the most part traditional elements of performance are utilized in a conventional way but with one exception - heroic recitation. Traditionally, a person praises himself using recitation to emphasize his good qualities.¹⁹⁵ In the play, 'Sins of Freedom' boasts of his evil qualities and thus makes a departure from tradition. In performance terms, this was quite effective in contradicting audience expectation of the form as well as

underlining the conflicts in the theme by establishing a conflict between the form and its content.

The play seemed to have made an impact when it was first performed in 1978. One observer commented:

Because of the direct way in which it confronted various crucial political and social questions related to Ujamaa ... the play was extremely popular. Government officials reportedly sat in on rehearsals, censoring parts of it from the beginning. Among other things the play showed secret ruling class meetings in which plans were made to sabotage the Arusha Declaration and the radical Mwongozo (Guidelines) documents, thus unmasking the rulers as demagogues.¹⁹⁶

While this comment points to the clarity of the thematic content, it has not put the role of 'officials' in the production of the play in the proper perspective. For the production of Harakati za Ukombozi demonstrated the kind of political and aesthetic contribution that can influence the final product of performance. The initial idea of the play came from the Youth Wing of the Party which wanted a production to celebrate the first anniversary of CCM. Because of the material resources of the sponsors, 57 performers from dance, drama and musical groups around Dar-es-Salaam came together to create the play under the direction of three people from the University of Dar-es-Salaam, N. Balisidya, Penina Mlama and A. Lihamba. Such cooperation has not been seen before nor since in Tanzania's theatre history. What the sponsors wanted was a play which could depict the historical evolution of the Party and celebrate its successes. The Party's mistake was in assuming that the directors upon whom it entrusted the responsibility for the venture shared its perspective as to why and how the historical

events have taken place. While the Party saw the birth of CCM as the apex of achievements by government and party leadership, the directors saw this as a groping around to search for solutions to resolve conflicts and contradictions. The directors' attitude became central to the theme and methods of presentation. When Party officials saw what was happening, they were not only unhappy but refused to endorse a public performance of the play. They could not stop it from being performed, however. The Party's dissociation from the production was enough to generate rumours that the play was banned. The directors were not officially notified and the play saw several successful performances which were attended by some curious officials. Later, the play was included in a programme which was to be attended by President Nyerere, but whether he saw it or what his comments were have never been clear. What has come to light is the organizers' attempts at making sure that the President never saw the production, so the final production was never censored as such but it never got total official approval either.

Another play which has generated a lot of interest since it first appeared in 1982 is Ayubu (Job) devised and performed by the Dar-es-Salaam based Paukwa Theatre Group. Ayubu is a complex play from the point of view of its aesthetic conception and portrayal of the political and social themes. It is a contemporary fable with elements both fantastical and real with a mixture of theatrical styles. The elements used do not always give a clear perspective of the issues but are intended more to provoke and incite questions from the audience.



Figure 19: Celebration for the 'haves' in Ayubu.



Figure 20: Diagnosis and lament for the 'have nots', Ayubu,
Paukwa TG, DSM, 1982.

The aim to expose problems, conflicts and contradictions as well as point to a possible solution of the era after Arusha is endowed with many ambiguities. Because of these and sometimes in spite of them, the play is politically and theatrically dynamic.

The play, according to Paukwa, took its conception from the Bible story of Job. The Job of the Bible is a man whose faith is tested by God. He is a wealthy man whose subsequent acceptance of misfortunes becomes proof of his faith and beliefs in his God. Because of his steadfastness, God rewards him by restoring his fortunes and position. The Job of the Bible and that of Ayubu, however, have only one thing in common - they are both visited by misfortunes. While the Bible Job clings to his faith and does not question the Almighty about his tribulations, the Job of Ayubu is not so patient. He gets tired of his tribulations and embarks on a quest to find answers. It is Job's quest to get at the root of his oppression and exploitation which gives the play its thematic progression. The progression develops through three major movements which are loosely interconnected but feed and support each other. The first movement starts with the creation of the world by God or Munhuchaka as he is called in the play. God is so confident about his powers and the ideal world he is fashioning that he does not realize that he has created besides man, Satana (Satan) and that there are flaws in his envisioned perfect harmonious beings and the world. Satana confronts God with this reality of His creation and the greater part of the first movement is taken up by this confrontation. Scenarios pose the idealistic perfect world of

Munhuchaka on one hand, and the imperfect human condition of oppression, misery and exploitation on the other. In this world is Ayubu whose entrance in the play starts the second movement. Ayubu laments his plight as a peasant and is on his way to get answers from Munhuchaka his God. On his journey, Ayubu meets such characters as academicians, politicians and businessmen who all think they have individual solutions to Ayubu's problems but who all fail. Ayubu also meets Satana through whom he is convinced the best way to achieve his aim is to take Munhuchaka to court. The last movement of the play is the court scene where Ayubu faces not God as the defendant in the case but Munhuchaka's representatives. God has refused to appear in person. In spite of his strong evidence, Ayubu loses the case.

The events of the play are presented through the exposition of contrasts, a technique seen also in Harakati za Ukombozi. This underlines the contradictions in the society presented and the root causes of conflicts. In the first movement, for example, a couple is shown to be living in happiness and love, This is contrasted with another couple bound together by hard labour and the effects of poverty. The two scenarios pose the conflict between the idealism of a visionary like Munhuchaka and the harsh realities of existence. God's statement 'I want them to live in harmony, wealth and luxury' means little to a world where men have to fight for survival. This fight is aggravated by the social organization of society itself, a factor which the play underlines towards the end of the first movement. In a mimed sequence, the play portrays a society which is self centred, wealthy

and blind to anything else except its own political and economic ambitions. The inhabitants gorge themselves with food, drink, political polemics and other excesses which culminate in orgies. Apemanship in politics and social activities have been perfected to an art which underlines the society's superficiality. Although Ayubu belongs to this society he is neither seen nor recognized. The political and social orgies of one class are contrasted with Ayubu's reality who laments:

I suffer and hurt
 Who is better, me or the caterpillar?
 I cannot tell ...
 My body has been wounded by poisonous arrows, the poison of
 poverty.¹⁹⁷

Ayubu's poverty is all encompassing: hunger, ill health, ignorance and lack of moral support. His greatest complaint, however, is that he has not been able to receive just returns for his hard labour. Ayubu then seeks to quarrel not with the others who perpetuate his condition but with the one responsible for the whole social system - God.

The thematic concern is also underscored by the use of two other processes in the play - repetition and parallelism. This is established through political links amongst characters and also through repetition of scenes of similar intent or compression of the overall intent within a particular action. Repetition is shown, for example, between the two scenes where Ayubu meets the politician and his group and where he meets the press. In the latter scene, Ayubu arouses interest only as an item of news. The media is more concerned about

its own questions and the expected answers rather than in Ayubu as a human being. In the last part of the scene, answers become irrelevant:

Satana I: Comrade, what is your name?

Ayubu: He who is not recognized, without a name.

Satana I: What?

Ayubu: I am called Ayubu.

Satana II: Can you tell us where you are coming from?

Ayubu: I don't know where I am coming from or where I am going.

Satana II: Perhaps you have not understood the question.

Ayubu: I have understood. Where the Earth leans.

Satana II: What do you do?

Ayubu: (Sings to himself)

Satana I: How many acres have you cultivated for food?

Satana II: Have you cultivated Serena*?

Satana I: Have you cultivated Lulu*?

Satana II: What about cassava?

Satana I: Do you cultivate in a socialist way or in a communal way (helping each other occasionally)?

Satana II: Do you have a tractor?

Satana I: Do you have a plough?¹⁹⁸

These attitudes and intentions are repeated in the following scene involving the politician, academic and businessman. Ayubu remains peripheral to both these scenes as the other characters pursue their

* Lulu and Serena are two types of drought resistant millet which the government has encouraged peasants to grow.

objectives. An earlier pantomimed speech by a politician is verbalized later by another politician who chants and boasts about his and the leaders' nationalistic achievements:

We came the liberators
 We came and uprooted the capitalists
 We uprooted tribalism, poverty and planted equality ...¹⁹⁹

His boast is contradicted by the presence of Ayubu just as in the earlier mime sequences of wealth and pleasures were contradicted by Ayubu's entrance on the scene. The contrasting sequences can also be seen as a stylistic repetition. The most obvious example of parallelism in the play can be seen in Ayubu's story about his journey towards the end of the play. Asked how he got to the courtroom, Ayubu recounts a journey in which he has had to walk a long way meeting obstacles and oppression on his way to find Munhuchaka. When he thinks he is finally there, he is told:

Ayubu, five steps back
 This is a holy place.²⁰⁰

Ayubu finds out that he cannot see Munhuchaka unless he pays for that privilege. He is told:

Your prayers are worthless
 If you want to come and talk to God Almighty, you must first
 of all give offerings
 If you are a peasant offer seven hundred times seventy-seven
 thousand times seventy-seven times seventy shillings.²⁰¹

This journey which is mimed and recited at the same time encapsulates all the other scenarios preceding it which show the plight of the Tanzanian peasant. It underscores Ayubu's total quest in the play by compressing his experiences in this story told to the judge at the end. Repetition and parallelism appear earlier in the play also.

In the first scene a song establishes the reasons for Ayubu's quest and the confrontations which follow. Satana sings to Munhuchaka:

... No one knows what you are doing and creatures are complaining
 You give to this one while that one has nothing
 What remains is chaos. Where is equality?

...
 Your powers have failed
 So let the young take over
 You cannot now do anything
 Your creature has awakened and joined hands with me.²⁰²

It projects the failure of the system to deal adequately with Ayubu's problems and the conflicts of exploitation portrayed by scenarios that follow.

Ayubu's quest is reminiscent of traditional journeys in myths and tales where protagonists face long and hazardous trips to find knowledge, put right a wrong or attain physical or spiritual healing powers. The voyagers usually meet and must contend with enemies who are real or metaphorical representations of powers and moral values. Ayubu also meets his adversaries. Those he meets on the way typify the social forces of contemporary reality rather than fantastical manifestations of moral or spiritual forces. The businessman, politician and academic that Ayubu meets try neither to understand his problem nor to give him realistic solutions. They are more interested in advancing their own causes. The businessman sees Ayubu's problem as financial but does not tell him how Ayubu should go about getting the money. Instead the businessman tells Ayubu how to spend money. The academic is more interested in his research and intellectual position rather than Ayubu's total reality. Ayubu to him is a specimen who gives him a chance to give a long lecture which sounds

like 'academic diarrhoea'. The politician diagnoses Ayubu's problem as ideological ignorance and lack of political commitment. All these make Ayubu impatient and justifiably angry. The play captures the attitudes and mood of the many academic researches, political polemics and ideology as well as economic theories which have become quite familiar and have been forwarded as solutions to ~~the~~ problems of the poor in Tanzania and elsewhere.

Ayubu's great moment comes in the courtroom scene. He accuses Munhuchaka of not rewarding Ayubu for his labour and turning a blind eye while others are exploiting him. Ayubu's evidence is shown through flash back scenarios of his life. The strongest of these expresses not only how Ayubu is exploited but also exposes factors which continue to legitimize his poverty. Ayubu is a peasant, a cotton farmer. He goes to sell his cotton at the officially appointed marketing authority. While there he is harrassed and pushed around. As a result of paying the numerous taxes, contributions to party and government self-reliant causes, and the deductions to pay for agricultural inputs - real or fictitious, Ayubu gets very little money in the end. He needs this money to cover for some basic needs so he takes it and tries to buy the necessary items. The money, however, is too little to cover the cost of even a single item. Ayubu the grower of cotton cannot buy cotton oil or clothing which are by-products of his labour. Munhuchaka as defendant refutes Ayubu's evidence and accuses the plaintiff as being responsible for his own state. A story is enacted in which Ayubu is shown to be the root cause of his problems. The story is a

popular traditional tale about imagination and ambition. Two brothers inherit two stones each. One brother uses his stones in an imaginative and cunning way. He survives and prospers. The other brother loses his stones, gets lost and is never heard from again.²⁰³ The lesson being that Ayubu, like the lost brother, has failed to use the talents distributed to everyone equally.

The court proceedings weigh heavily in favour of Ayubu but his case is thrown out nevertheless. Judgement is given not through fair weighing of the evidence but is shown to be the result of a game of chance. The judge dismisses the case after picking the verdict out of a hat. It is a careless gesture which makes nonsense of justice and whatever preceded it. Even in court, Ayubu's fate is in the hands of justice which is uncaring, capricious and in the long run biased. This is to be expected because the court has been set up by the same system which Ayubu is accusing - God. Ayubu's illusions of gaining anything through this official structure are shattered by Satana who plays judge in the proceedings. At the end of the play, Ayubu is more frustrated and angry, and protests, 'I want justice, I demand it'. He is finally alone summoning others like him to take matters in their own hands. There is a hint here that the peasants had better work towards a revolution of their own, but the play leaves the matter open.

The play's strength lies in portraying class conflicts and contradictions as seen not only in social structures but within individuals as well. The point was underlined in performance by making the same actors portray roles of a similar class nature and the individual

character objectives strengthened the existence of contradiction even within particular classes. For example, there was a direct link established between the politician and God's attorney in the court played by the same actor. The academic, however, who appeared earlier and was definitely part of the ruling class, became the prosecuting attorney for Ayubu. Satana was both Ayubu's defender and his judge. Because of these, social reality was made very complex and dialectical. Ayubu's quest becomes then not only a journey to demand justice but a conscientization process in which he becomes more aware of the forces around him. At the beginning of the play, Ayubu's awareness is fragmented. His only aim was to get a reasonable explanation from God or the system concerning his plight. The initial blind search turned into concrete awareness that God was responsible for his poverty and oppression, and became an offensive act that demanded confrontation. In the end Ayubu realized that God would not bring the change Ayubu demanded and a rejection of the social and political system was achieved through his new awareness.

While the characterization of Ayubu is given a straightforward representation of the 'silent majority', some of the other characters are not so simple. Satana presents the most complex character of the play and evokes layers of meanings, symbols and representations. First of all, there is the Satana created by Munhuchaka who in the process acquires god-like qualities. He has earned disfavour (not clear in the play) from his creator and is condemned to hell. But this is not a Satan who spends his time in Hades but is constantly

making himself a nuisance to God, challenging him and acting as agent-provocateur to man. He supports man's cause but at times taunts him and works against his interest. In his origins this Satan is close to the one presented in the Bible but his capriciousness speaks more of a creature within the African world view than a Judaic one. He is kin brother to the Shetani of the Wamakonde and Waswahili mythology who in the cosmological set-up possesses both destructive and constructive elements. Satana in Ayubu, however, transcends these in his possession of powers which enable him to challenge God. In this he is like the Satan who tempted Jesus Christ on the Mount, a daring act within Christian mythology. With this mixture of qualities, Satana is an ambiguous character within the social and political schemes of the play. There is no evidence to show that the mixture of the Christian and African concepts of Satan was developed consciously by the producers of Ayubu. It is probably the result of the producers' own cultural reality informed by the two cultures which unconsciously endowed Satana with his qualities. So, Satan plays a multiplicity of functions in Ayubu. He is the story-teller who provides links between the scenarios standing between the audience and the play and yet being an important part of the actions that move the play. He is a mysterious, colourful figure who makes God appear dull and unsympathetic. He is at the same time part of man's consciousness, evoking images of freedom and power which man aspires to attain. He provides the shocks and reminders of the nature of social reality, pushing man to self-awareness and choices for action. This is strongly underscored in

Satana's last act as judge. By throwing Ayubu's case out, he affirms Ayubu's ineffectual action within the established system but this act also pushes Ayubu to opt for a different tactic to achieve the justice he wants.

God as Munhuchaka is not so complicated. Some of his mythological values have been strengthened to show him as vain, egocentric, short-sighted and uncaring for the mess he is responsible for in his creation. He is not a malicious God but nevertheless cruel when he turns a blind eye to a world which has nothing to do with his ideal conception of it. He is also a weak God who shies away from direct confrontation with his adversaries. This God is no different from the political leadership which has been common in many places in Africa. With the attainment of independence or with the institutionalizing of such political decrees as the Arusha Declaration, the leaderships as the creators of their societies, live in the glory of their intended idealized society and not often in the harsh realities of their people's existence. They not only refuse to cope with the problems but endorse elements which work against the utopia they have planned. In Ayubu, the activities of the leadership are shown to work against the equity, democracy and participation which the Arusha Declaration intended. Instead, they have developed further forms of exploitation and oppression intentionally or otherwise.

The play Ayubu was developed through improvisation which took a whole year before the play saw a public performance. The complexity of the issues handled and the manner of portrayal no doubt contributed

to this length of time. The play provides one example where a script developed after and not prior to performance. Unfortunately, the published script does not capture all the dynamism of the production since it exists in outline form rather than in its totality. It nevertheless exposes the major aesthetic preoccupations of the producers - utilization of traditional elements of expression. Music, dance, poetic forms, narratives as well as dramatic scenarios portrayed elements both realistic and fantastical. The mixture of genres seems to suit well the expression of complex reality existing in the play. This and the constant move from the real to the fantastic, the now to the past makes the play non-realistic in its presentation. The fragmentary nature of its progression makes it possible to accept a certain amount of ambiguity where the causes and effects of actions need not be immediately justified as in the case of conventional naturalism or realism. The play is nevertheless unbalanced. Whereas the first and second movements of the play are more theatrically effective, the third movement tends to drag and be a bit ponderous. The reason for this is because in the earlier part of the play there are quick movements in style and expression through stylized movements, dance, recitations, songs, poetry, interspersed between short dialogue scenarios. The last part uses more dialogue and less of the other elements making the rhythms in this part more constant and predictable. This result endorses strongly the usage of traditional elements of performance which have given the first part of the play its dynamism.

The creation and performance of Ayubu brought together the

accumulated experiences of Paukwa members, most of whom had been working together for the previous six years. During that period, the group produced such plays as Mabatini (1977), The Swamp Dwellers (1980), The Burdens (1981), Chuano (1980) and The Island (1982). These plays established Paukwa as one of the major theatrical companies in the country which has drawn audiences from all walks of life. It has been with Ayubu, however, that the group's aesthetic and political approach is consolidated.

By 1984 members of Paukwa included a journalist, a film director, a playwright, a lawyer, a choreographer, a linguist, a short story writer, a film producer, and a theatre director. Four of these were also lecturers in various aspects of theatre at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. All of the members had long experience in performance and/or theatre training from institutions within the country or abroad. In the six years that Paukwa has been in existence, the members have managed to develop themselves into an ensemble and produce works which bear the stamp of group efforts rather than highlighting the inputs of an individual. Ayubu has been the result of not only group efforts but it has also exposed a shared ideological perspective to politics and theatre development. It has also represented, more strongly than any other play, the mood, political reaction and aesthetic ambitions of theatre of the early eighties. These factors are variously reflected in Lina Ubani and Nguzo Mama written just before Ayubu.

Lina Ubani (It Has Incense) is the most complex and aesthetically interesting of Penina Muhando's plays. Here again, the situation is

contemporary. In 1978, Tanzania went to war against Idi Amin of Uganda after the latter invaded its territory and claimed a portion of it. The conflict came at a propitious moment for the Ugandan liberation army which had been planning to overthrow Amin for almost a decade. Tanzania committed not only men and women to fight in the war but also a chunk of its already strained financial resources. Public sentiment moved from a show of national patriotism in support of the government action to disillusionment in the wake of human and material loss during and after the war. The public has displayed scepticism of the government's reasons of continuing to support the current government of Uganda several years after the hostilities have ended and Uganda has returned to a 'democratic' government. Lina Ubani was written with this background in mind, but the general framework is the social and political reality after 1967.

The play is developed through two major parallel stories. There is first an old woman who has lost a son in the war against Amin. She emotionally and psychologically refuses to accept the fact that he is dead and in her search to find the rationale of what she challenges as a 'senseless death', she deteriorates both physically and mentally. Parallel to this is the story of another one of her sons who is working in the department responsible for research in energy resources. His work is frustrated not only by an insensitive bureaucratic system but also by an uninformed and opportunistic leadership which cares only for its own pockets and pleasures. Because of his principles and care for the common good, Huila finally loses favour and his job from a system

which tolerates no social reformers. The two stories are skillfully interwoven in the structure of the play which uses both narrative and dramatic conventions. A unity is achieved through the use of a narrator-commentator who provides links for various parts of the play as well as acting like an 'alter ego' for both the old woman and the audience. The overall effect, however, is that of fragmentation as all the characters in the play fight their own losing battles. Huila's dedication in the pursuit of appropriate technology is hindered by leaders who are suspicious of intellectuals and jealous of their positions in both the party and the government. These leaders take advice from no one while research recommendations end up in the waste paper baskets; the leaders are shown to be ignorant and yet they have the developmental fate of the country in their hands. Huila becomes frustrated. The need for survival, however, forces Huila to keep fighting until the system pushes him out. At the same time, Bibi (Huila's mother) fights against the same system from a different position. Her's is a search for meaning in all the events of her life especially after independence and the Arusha Declaration. She asks:

Long ago there was slavery. I hear they used to pass by our village on the way to the coast. Slavery ended. Then came colonialism, Europeans came to live with us. Colonialism ended and Europeans left. Then came independence, they removed the chiefs ... Then we heard Ujamaa, Ujamaa. This Ujamaa, when does the teacher say it's going to end?²⁰⁴

She seeks to understand a system which has made people's lives harder by the implementation of policies which are vague and seemingly unplanned while eroding into traditional values which were, for some, the basis of cohesion and responsibility. She directs her attack

towards a presence which is invisible to all but her. For her, this presence can be interpreted as the compound political leadership of the country which is responsible for not only her suffering but the sufferings of others as they fight for political and economic survival. In the end, in spite of her challenge, the system does not respond nor fall but instead, she meets her death while feebly protesting. Huila and Bibi's fights are supported by Sara's struggle against food shortages and Mota's search to comprehend the social chaos around her. But it is Mwanahego, a drunk and social under-dog who summarizes all their struggles, political and social. He brings into focus the contradictions between political rhetoric and social practice. While the leaders on their mountain tops are exhorting people to unite, work harder, and are busy 'eating on the people's behalf', Mwanahego and those like him can only retort:

You, on the mountain top are the only one who is not working. Are there fields on the mountain top? Your father is he who does not work. He eats free food which you bring, which you steal from us.²⁰⁵

But are these really words of a drunkard? He is a worker whose meagre earnings cannot make ends meet and therefore he has resorted to the bliss which alcohol brings. His wife and children have left him but in his disillusionment he has found his tongue and an awareness of the political and economic forces which guide his life.

The thematic throughline of Lina Ubani is held together by the story of Dyamini told by Bibi through the story-teller. This is a tale which is traditional but very immediate to the events of the play. Long time ago, we are told, there was a village full of laughter and

hard working people. One day, a monster by the name of Dyamini invades the forest next to the village forcing the animals and birds to take refuge in the village. The villagers not only feed and take care of the animals and the birds but finally chase away Dyamini and rehabilitate the creatures in their original home. Back in the village, however, life takes a turn for the worse. Because of the war, fields had not been cultivated and the cost of the war has become the excuse for the absence of all other necessary commodities. This is an obvious parallel to Tanzania's involvement in the war against Uganda. When the economic situation worsened, the war became a scapegoat for all evils from armed robbery to the absence of sugar in the shops. Those with 'sharp teeth' sharpened theirs harder and robbed those with 'blunt teeth' while corruption and suspicion reigned.

A major criticism of the play is that it tries to do too much with a too wide social framework. All the problems and contradictions of the post-Arusha period have been thrown into a common pot where they share a very thin political and economic root cause. Attention is called to the existence of a multiplicity of social evils whose historical and political base is more hinted at than explicitly underlined. But looked at as a protest play, the various disconnected themes and conflicts become a chorus of lament against corruption, economic exploitation and political short-sightedness. The cumulative effect is that of a chorus of protests caught at a moment of time and sustained for two hours rather than a musical score with a beginning, a middle and an end. The lament is underscored by the mournful cries of

Bibi throughout the play, the constant struggles of Sarah and Huila as well as the angry outbursts of the drunken Mwanahego. This lament comes from three distinct groups of the society, the peasantry, the workers and the intellectuals as represented by Bibi, Mwanahego and Huila respectively. But each displays a different kind of protest because of the different awareness of the economic and political processes which in turn affect their individual action to deal with their plight. Bibi feels and knows that her life has been disrupted both emotionally and socially. She demands answers from whoever is responsible for her plight but remains unconscious of the political and economic forces affecting her. She believes that, as in the old days, when a ruler or system was good the people under it prospered, so now she wills the downfall of 'the people of the mountain' so that they'll stand on equal ground with her and provide answers. As they are now, these people do not provide good leadership. Bibi, unlike Ayubu, knows from the very beginning who is the culprit in her situation and that the powers responsible must fall to achieve any change. Her's, however, is not a physical and active quest like Ayubu's, it is a mental condition which finally destroys her. She finds no outlet for expression except in her growing mental deterioration. Muhando uses an element of madness again here as she did in Pambo. But while Pambo gets worse then is cured, Bibi is destroyed by her madness. Her madness is not like Pambo's either. Bibi is a seer who knows what has to be done to bring social change but she is caught up in her own obsession and is destroyed by it. Her death becomes a comment on what

can happen if voices like hers are not heard. Even in her death Bibi remains the story-teller who points the audience's attention to the fate of a society like hers. Her inability to act following the knowledge she possesses points both to a dilemma and a character weakness. She stands out from the play as a majestic, pathetic and angry figure, but she has no impact on the behaviour or activities of the other characters except for her granddaughter. Her protest and lament do not change throughout the play. She is like a singer who has been given one note to hold with an increase in intensity rather than variation. She is the voice of the traditional and contemporary peasant but this is a voice in the wilderness with little consciousness on what to do about social reality. She complains: 'I cannot perform this dance'. Her grief for her son is so strong that she does not know how to mourn or to dance' the experience of it. But the lament points also to her inability to live effectively in her society imbued with conflicts and contradictions. It is through the imagery of the dance that the writer makes the link between Bibi and the revolution to come. Just before she exits from the scene, the dancer with his drum enters to start performing the dance of revolution. Bibi recognizes the dance which will bring the downfall of her adversary and is ecstatic about it. It is left to others, however, to do the dance which she could not perform.

Mwanahego's awareness is more developed. He knows that his oppression and exploitation comes from class contradictions which thrive on widening the gap between the haves and the have nots. But

beyond cursing those up on the mountain he remains helpless and caught up in the vicious circle of the working poor. As an intellectual, Huila believes in working within the system and bringing change by holding on to his principles and knowledge. Even when the going is rough, he does not withdraw himself but remains until rejected. The futility of his struggle for national rational action is overshadowed by his need for survival. The impetus for revolution, however, does not come from these three but from an artist, a singer-dancer. His song and dance is picked up by all the Mwanahegos who during their dance realize that 'the bad smell of anything can be removed by incense'. They realize that it is by picking up the spears, the arrows, the axes and even the stones that change will be possible.

The dancer who makes the call for revolution belongs to the peasant class because it is to them that the drum he beats belongs. Those who respond to the drum's call are also other peasants who recognize its rhythms and the dance patterns. The weapons they carry also belong to them - 'sticks, spears, arrows, axes and stones'. There is a definite call here for a peasant revolution. The need for this revolution is suggested in the title of the play and strengthened by the song of the peasants during their dance of revolution - 'any bad smell emanating from rot has its incense'. Incense ordinarily is used to bring in a fresh smell, a fragrance. Muhando seems to say, just as bad smells are wafted away by incense, so social corruption has its own medicine - 'Lina Ubani'. But incense does not clean other smells, it only overpowers them and after a while the smell of rot can return.

This is where Muhando's metaphor seems to totter and does not support the total revolution suggested at the end of the play. If the removal of the leadership by a peasant revolution is like covering the smell of rot by incense, then no real solutions are being sought. The smell of anything is only the effect and not the cause of corruption.

The combined use of narrative forms as well as dramatic scenarios brings out the contrasts between metaphorical and realistic elements used in the play. Not only is the language endowed with metaphorical allusions, but in the narrative parts of the play, the characters, the events and the space are metaphorical as well. The setting is cosmic encompassing the past, the future and the present as well as the living and the dead. The setting of the narrative in the sky and the mountain top is contrasted to the mundane setting of the rest of the play in places taken from real life. The leadership of the country lives on the mountain top and the sky is the domain of the monster Dyamini. The use of the mountain top and the skies as places where dominant forces of either evil or political power live seems to be a common feature in both oral and written African literature. Hussein uses the sky as Sesota's domain in Ngao ya Jadi, while the Mtemi who fights Sesota retreats to the mountain top for contemplation and cleansing.²⁰⁶ The mountain top is also the retreat of Kongi in Soyinka's Kongi's Harvest.²⁰⁷ In Lina Ubani the invisible evil forces of the mountain work upon those on the ground. The metaphorical setting of the mountain top contrasts with the realistic nature of the setting for the dramatic scenarios. Metaphor and poetry are absent in both

the language and characterization by the use of everyday speech; the use of specific realistic performing areas and items such as houses, props, meeting places; and the pre-occupation of the characters with contemporary social and economic issues. There is another structural difference as well. While the narrative part of the play develops in a circular manner, the drama follows a conventional linear progression in which events surrounding both Bibi and Huila have a beginning, middle and end. While in the drama Bibi's death signals her end and Huila's downfall, the narrative part suggests that the action continues after the curtain falls. The frozen moment after the people have picked up arms to start a new revolution is a moment which suggests continuity in the narrative and leaves it open ended.

Nguzo Mama (Main Pillar or Mother Pillar) is another play by Penina Muhando which tackles problems of social change and development. The theme is developed on two levels: the general problems of social development and the obstacles faced in the process, and the specific problems hindering the development and emancipation of women. These two aspects of the theme are shown through the relationships amongst the women and these to the society at large through their interaction with the men around them.

The events of the play are set in the fictitious village of Patata but it is quite obvious that Muhando had Tanzania in mind while writing the play. Not only is the play informed by a cultural milieu common to Tanzania but also takes its historical perspective from developments after 1967. Patata, once prosperous and the envy of

other villages, finds itself facing a host of problems which are hindering its development. Amongst these are the oppression and exploitation especially of women. For in Patata, we are told, 'the child carriers were badly oppressed, they were seen as not human even though they were responsible for society's growth'. Exploitation and oppression become such an acute disease that the ancestors step in with help. They hand to Patata a pillar - 'Nguzo Mama' which will help it solve its problems. Nguzo Mama here has layered meanings. It is, on one hand the basic support needed in building a sound house, and on the other, it is imbued with the kind of human support mothers give to their children, an emotional support connoting love, care and understanding. In their individual way, each is needed in raising up a house or a child. For Patata, 'Nguzo Mama' becomes that element which it needs to build an equitable society. The Arusha Declaration or independence are historical factors which find their representation in Nguzo Mama. When Nguzo Mama is found, however, it is lying on the ground and the people of Patata are given the responsibility of raising it up so that it stands erect. After the usual celebrations to welcome the pillar, problems ensue in the process of raising it up. Disunity, self-interests, lack of democracy and seriousness, hypocrisy, a despotic leadership and opting for rhetoric rather than action are amongst the problems which hinder the people of Patata from lifting the pillar up. As the deadline given by the ancestors approaches, the women who alone have been left to accomplish the task find themselves unable to raise the pillar individually or collectively.

The play tries to make three major points. Firstly, that the burden of development has been placed on the shoulders of a section of society and in this case the women. These work while others watch and consume the results of their labour. After the appearance of 'Nguzo Mama', we are told, 'the Fathers of Patata did an about turn / back to their beds / back to the embrace of sleep'.²⁰⁸ The women are left alone to do the job. The second point the play makes is that women see the need for social change for themselves and society but they are too divided to achieve a consensus for action. Class differentials and individualism work against women's desire to extricate themselves from oppression and underdevelopment. The women in the play are types who are identified only as numbers representing class or professional status. They try at first to raise the pillar individually choosing methods informed by their particular social background. A politician, a prostitute, a peasant, a healer, a worker and academic bring their individual perspectives regarding the best method to tackle the task at hand. When they fail individually, they try to pull the pillar together but they also fail to raise it. They are too distracted by bickering and outside interference. When a man passes by, the prostitute leaves to solicit for trade, an act which starts a fight between her and the man's wife. Two women are being harrassed by a husband and relatives of a deceased husband. There is at the same time great animosity between the politician and the academic woman. Women are also distracted by other responsibilities as mothers and wives. Amidst all these, no one concentrates on the task in hand of

raising 'Nguzo Mama'.

The third point which the play makes is that there has been lack of scientific approach to tackling developmental problems including those faced by women. The failure to raise Nguzo Mama is the failure to proceed from understanding and research to concrete action. The women lack the consciousness to realize that understanding the problem and its root causes is the first step towards a solution. After this, proper skills, methodology and tools are then needed to effect the solution. Only the academic woman implores, 'let us first see why it does not move' but her call falls on deaf ears. The women keep pulling and chanting 'Lift, lift' as their second deadline approaches. A serious and critical approach has been abandoned in favour of slogans and ineffectual short cut activities. The post Arusha period has witnessed a similar problem.

Muhando makes it clear in the play that development cannot be achieved through non-involvement of some sections of a society, political sloganeering, mere idealism or superstitious beliefs. The play underscores development as a process to a destination and not the destination alone. Unless the process is understood and properly followed, one will tire oneself pushing an immovable pillar. Here, one can identify the problems after 1967 and the inhibiting factors which have retarded or hindered Tanzania's dream of a better society.

Besides the general issues of development and the failure to follow through such factors as the Arusha Declaration, Nguzo Mama provides a comment on a specific structure concerning women in

Tanzania, the Union of Tanzanian Women or UWT.²⁰⁹ The organization can be seen as a structure which is supposed to work towards the development of Tanzanian women and its failure to do so is a result of similar problems women face in raising 'Nguzo Mama' in the play. The historical development of UWT can be traced back to the early 1950s when the Tanganyika Council of Women was founded under the leadership of the wife of the then Governor of Tanganyika. Only the wives of ranking colonial officials were eligible to join. The holding of tea parties was the main activity of the Council. When TANU was founded in 1954, a women's section was included and this was followed up by the founding of UWT in 1962. The organization had many objectives amongst which were: to unite all the women in the country, to stimulate and encourage women to participate in economic, political, educational and cultural areas and to maintain the dignity and integrity of women. The history of UWT, however, shows that these objectives are far from being pursued, let alone achieved. The organization has been plagued by disorganization, conflicts and petty rivalries. It has not risen to be a force in women's development. It has been used by some to further political and social ambitions and has failed to come up with concrete courses of action to tackle the problems facing Tanzanian women, especially the peasants. The colonial 'tea and cake' syndrome has been replaced by the 'khangas' syndrome as the most important activity of UWT. Just like Patata where 'Nguzo Mama' is found, most villages have their UWT branches. But these are basically ceremonial entities with occasional meetings

and some participation in political festivities. Neither does UWT get strong support from the working and professional women because of the animosity existing between these and the UWT leadership made up mostly of politicians or wives of politicians. Nor does the organization get the needed support from the men as they see it as a women's affair. The parallels which exist between UWT and the activities of women in Nguzo Mama are too many to make these just coincidental. The organization and its problems must have informed the writer who at one time was an active member of UWT but later withdrew from active participation.

Nguzo Mama uses a blend of traditional performance elements and drama. Dance, music, poetry and narration are the main formal features. The poetic language of free verse and the rhythms suggest a musical score which makes the work favour an operatic style more than any other. Unlike in Pambo where the poetry is stilted and repetitious, the poetry in Nguzo Mama flows more easily aiding the progression of the play. The action of the play is held together and developed through the principal character in the play, the narrator. The narrator follows the traditional story-telling technique of moving the story forward, providing a commentary on the events and characters as well as participating in acting out the roles of other characters. As the narrator, she is an objective character who stands outside the events of the play to direct the audience's understanding of the issues and the characters. She is not alone in this role, however, for Muhando includes another character who more than the others points out

the underlying conflicts within Patata - Chizi. When you call someone chizi in Kiswahili you mean he cannot be taken seriously. He is a person expected to behave the opposite of what is expected in accepted social norms. His ability to do or say something out of place is a cause for apprehension for those who fear embarrassment. Chizi of Patata is such a character. He is also the social comedian who causes both laughter and consternation because he exposes the ugly side of life few want to hear or see. In this, he has the licence of the clown.²¹⁰ Chizi is both an outcast and an artist, a musician. From his position of isolation, he sees clearly the confusion and the social ills of his society and exposes them. His voice is directed not to the other characters in the play but to the audience. Chizi performs, therefore, the same function as Mwanahago in Lina Ubani, Mlevi Bavubavu in Pinzani and Satana in Ayubu. These are voices which are rational in spite of the social stigma suggested in their names and in the plays these characters carry their creators' comments on the society they deal with.

Nguzo Mama strongly suggests a play constructed as a riddle. The riddle elements are not as obvious as in Hussein's Jogoo Kijijini and Ngao ya Jadi but reside mainly in the metaphor and symbolism of its point of focus, the 'Nguzo Mama'. Put in a traditional riddle format, the riddle in Nguzo Mama would go like this: What is that I need badly to build my house and yet when I pull this way or that way it does not move? The metaphors and symbols provided in the play are part of the clues to the riddle. But the riddle can be unscrambled only by

translating the metaphors and symbols as well as assembling all of these together. The writer gives this task to the audience and leaves the ending open.

The structure of Nguzo Mama shows that metaphors and symbols have gained popularity as part of the theatrical expression of the late seventies and early eighties. Popular also has been the use of multiple plots which can be found in many plays of the period. These features have been variously used in several of the plays already discussed such as Lina Ubani, Ayubu, Jogoo Kijijini, Arusi, Ngao y Jadi and Sokomoko. Symbolism, metaphorical representations and multiple plots can also be found in such other plays of the period as Njia Panda (Crossroad) 1981²¹¹, Kilio Kisimani (The Cry at the Well) 1979²¹², Chakatu, Tunda (The Fruit) 1981²¹³, and Kaputula La Marx (The Shorts of Marx) 1979.²¹⁴ The use of the elements in these plays attests to an attempt at being theatrically inventive but this conscious effort does not hide the fact that the elements have always been present, at varying degrees, within traditional forms of theatre expression. The use of metaphors and symbolism was discussed at length in Chapter 1. Multiple plots is a feature which can be found in traditional storytelling, for example. Some traditional tales follow several plots which are linked either by a central moral or are parts which make up the main fable. The different plots may start together (in time or place), diverge and link some time later, or start from different angles and meet later. The plots mirror each other, provide contrasts or reversals of situations and the characters involved. Parallelism

becomes an important feature in such cases. It is a feature which is being reclaimed in the plays mentioned above. The use of such devices as multiple plots and especially metaphors and symbols has given some of the contemporary plays a sense of theatrical vitality. These elements, however, have also played another important part in theatre practice of the period. It has released writers and devisers to tackle issues which have been seen as too sensitive to bring out into the open. Besides their aesthetic considerations, the elements have provided a political safety valve even in cases where their presence has provided a very thin veil to the reality they represent. In Lina Ubani, for example, Muhando can boldly call for the toppling down of not the leaders but 'The Leader'. Kezilahabi advocates a similar political action in his Kaputula La Marx but within a larger political statement. The political issue of the play is Ujamaa as both ideology and practice.²¹⁵ The play tries to show that Ujamaa cannot work because as an ideology it is too idealistic and incoherent. It is a hodge podge of brands of socialisms which when put together is both ridiculous and impractical. The result is like putting on the shorts of Marx (rather than his long trousers or scientific socialism), the beard of Ho Chi Minh and Mao's overcoat. Thus attired the journey to attain an envisioned socialist society is shown to be both ridiculous and impossible. These are statements which have been variously made by social scientists²¹⁶ but have remained until the late seventies in the thoughts of theatre practitioners. Metaphors, symbols and the use of elements of fantasy have given writers a political boldness. This

boldness is evidenced in the writers' approach and attitudes to areas hitherto not spoken aloud as well as in the use of satire and ridicule to make their points clear. The satire is meant to explain, identify and attack particular historical factors and individuals responsible for the state of social and political reality. At the same time, the satire is meant to arouse a desire for corrections and new courses of action.

The plays and theatre works discussed in this Chapter have been a major part of the theatre experience after 1967. For the most part these works have been produced by individuals or groups with limited or no support from the State. The following Chapter discusses theatre practice in state agencies and institutions and looks into the general and specific policies which have informed theatre in specific areas.

Notes to Chapter 4

- 1 For biographical information on the writer, see Jesse Mollé, 'The Drama of Penina Muhando', M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1979.
- 2 Penina Muhando, Tambueni Haki Zetu, Dar-es-Salaam, 1973.
- 3 Ibid., p.34.
- 4 See John Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, New York, 1970, p.282.
- 5 See Benjamin C. Ray, op.cit., p.147.
- 6 Mugyabuso Mulokozi, Mukwava wa Uhehe, Nairobi, 1979. The name Mukwava usually appears as Mkwawa in other works. The present study uses the former.
- 7 John Iliffe, 1979, op.cit., p.57. On Mukwava see besides John Iliffe, pp.107-116; Andrew Roberts, ed., Tanzania before 1900, Nairobi, 1968, pp.37-58; Alison Redmayne, 'The Wahehe People of Tanganyika', Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1964. For Wahehe, see Hehe in Map 2.
- 8 John Iliffe, ibid.
- 9 Ibid., p.110. This description of Mukwava was provided by mainly colonial resources and needs to be taken with some reservations.
- 10 After Mukwava's death, the Germans decapitated him and took his head to Germany. It was returned to Mukwava's people in 1954.
- 11 Mukwava wa Uhehe, p.23.
- 12 Ibid., p.103.
- 13 Ibid., pp.48-49.
- 14 Ibid., p.48.
- 15 Ibid., pp.105-106.

- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid., p.104.
- 18 Ibid., p.27.
- 19 Ibid., p.5.
- 20 Research by such native historians as Gwassa have contributed much to the understanding of Maji Maji since the mid sixties. See G.C.K. Gwassa, 'The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji war 1905-7', Ph.D. thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973.
- 21 Edwin Semzaba, Tendehogo, Dar-es-Salaam, 1984. See Figure 9.
- 22 See P.O. Mlama, Utunzi wa Tamthiliya Katika Mazingara ya Tanzania in Fasihi: 3 - Makala ya Kimataifa ya Waandishi wa Kiswahili, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1983, p.214 (my translation).
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 See D.H. Mgange, Dira ya Shujaa, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977; E. Mbogo, Tone La Mwisho, Dar-es-Salaam, 1981. The Vulture was Herbert Shore's adaptation of The Dragon by the Soviet writer Eugeny Schwartz. The Vulture was performed in 1969 and E.N. Hussein and G.Z. Kaduma were the directors.
- 25 See E.N. Hussein, 1975, op.cit., p.86.
- 26 The Nationalist, September 12, 1969, p.4.
- 27 On African unity see amongst others Julius K. Nyerere, Freedom and Unity, op.cit., pp.300-304, 85-98.
- 28 On the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, see amongst others Robert Mugabe, Our War of Liberation, Gweru, 1983; Elaine Windrich, The Mass Media in the Struggle for Zimbabwe, Gwelo, 1981.
- 29 Tone La Mwisho, p.10.
- 30 See Crispin D.E. Hauli, 'Dunia Iliyofarakana' in DarLite, Vol.3 no.2, March 1969, pp.84-108; W.T. Kisanji, 'Pinzani' in J.M. Mbonde, ed., Michezo ya Kuigiza, Dar-es-Salaam, 1976, pp.134-174;

Malingumu G.R. Rutashobya, Nuru Mpya,
Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.

- 31 Dunia Iliyofarakana in DarLite, op.cit., p.85.
- 32 Ibid., p.87.
- 33 Ibid., p.107.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid., p.108.
- 36 See E.N. Hussein, 1975, op.cit., p.79.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 J.P. Mbonde, Bwana Mkubwa, Nairobi, 1974.
- 39 Pinzani in Michezo ya Kuigiza, op.cit., p.174.
- 40 On Mwongozo and the workers' struggle in Tanzania during the early seventies see Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania, op.cit., pp.123-145. A workers' struggle was earlier depicted in Ramadhani's Mgomo wa Mazinde, 1968, (unpublished but available at University of Dar-es-Salaam library).
- 41 G. UHINGA, Martin Kayamba in DarLite, Vol.2, no.2, August 1968, pp.133-152.
- 42 G. UHINGA, Rejalla in DarLite, Vol.3, no.1, January 1969, pp.24-38.
- 43 See John Iliffe, 1979, op.cit., pp.266-8.
- 44 See E.N. Hussein, 1975, op.cit., p.63. John Iliffe has also described Kayamba as 'the most Anglophile of Africans' in his time. See John Iliffe, 1979, p.357.
- 45 Martin Kayamba, p.152. On the post Arusha official attitudes on education see J.K. Nyerere, Education Must Liberate Man, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974.
- 46 Penina Muhando, Pambo, Nairobi, 1975. See Figure 11.
- 47 Ibid., pp.34, 36, 56.

- 48 The use of names as symbols of rural or social characteristics is a common feature in Tanzanian plays. It can be found in such other plays as Nuru Mpya, Pinzani, Nguzo Mama, Ayubu and many others. It is also a common feature in improvised plays of the period as well. All of these are discussed in this chapter.
- 49 G.Z. Kaduma, Dhamana na Mabatini, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 50 Many improvised plays took the issue as their theme, and it features in Giza Limeingia, Huka, Hatia and some plays for popular theatre. See Chapter 6.
- 51 This story has been attributed to have been used also by President Nyerere on one occasion but remains part of the popular lore.
- 52 Mabatini, p.62. See Figure 12.
- 53 See Introduction to Mabatini, p.ix.
- 54 Kaduma has taught dance at the University of Dar-es-Salaam and his research on traditional dances appears in his M.A. thesis 'A Theatrical Description of Five Tanzanian Dances', University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1972.
- 55 Dhamana, p.15.
- 56 Edwin Semzaba, Hesabu Iliyoharibika, in J.M. Mbonde, ed., Michezo ya Kuigiza, op.cit., pp.49-95.
- 57 H.M. Liyoka, Dunia Imeharibika, Dar-es-Salaam, 1978.
- 58 Mobali Muba, Hukooo Darisalama, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 59 Mobali Muba, Maalim, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 60 See note no.42 above.
- 61 Ibrahim Ngozi, Machizi ya Mwanamke, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977.
- 62 Penina Muhando, Heshima Yangu, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974.
- 63 See Penina Muhando, 'Talaka si Mke Wangu' in J.M. Mbonde, ed., Michezo ya Kuigiza, pp.96-121.

- 64 Machozi ya Mwanamke, p.iii.
- 65 Ibid., p.39.
- 66 Penina Muhando, Hatia, Nairobi, 1972.
- 67 See M.L. Matteredu in a review article of Hatia in Mulika, no.7, March 1975, p.8.
- 68 See such Brechtian plays as The Good Person of Szechwan, The Three Penny Opera, Galileo and others found in numerous publications.
- 69 See Senkoro, 1983, op.cit., p.2.
- 70 Hatia, p.10.
- 71 Jesse Mollé, 1979, op.cit., p.87.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 N. Ngahyoma, Huka, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975.
- 74 K.K. Kahigi na A.A. Ngomera, Mwanzo wa Tufani, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977.
- 75 Ibid., p.2.
- 76 Ibid., p.15.
- 77 Ibid., p.32.
- 78 Ibid., p.51.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 E. Mbogo, Giza Limeingia, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980.
- 81 Mukotani Ruyendo, The Contest in The Barbed Wire and Other Plays, London, 1977, pp.39-58.
- 82 The Contest, p.40.
- 83 Ibid., pp.44 & 50.
- 84 Ibid., p.46.
- 85 Ibid., pp.50-51; 53.
- 86 Etherton concludes that the ending of The Contest is open. See Michael Etherton, 1982, op.cit., p.96.

- 87 The Contest, p.37.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 The play translated as Chuano was performed in Dar-es-Salaam and Erlangen, Germany, in May 1980. The script has not been published. See Figure 14.
- 90 The Contest, p.38.
- 91 The play was written when the government was waging an actual campaign to resettle the jobless. See The Daily News, November 22, 29, 30, 1976; March 3, 8, 14, 15, 1977.
- 92 Giza Limeingia, p.94.
- 93 Ibid., pp.71-81.
- 94 See Julius K. Nyerere, Ujamaa ni Imani, Dar-es-Salaam, 1976, pp. 47-55. See also The Arusha Declaration, Part 5, in Nyerere, 1969, op.cit.
- 95 Gervas Moshiro, Chama Chetu in DarLite, Vol.1, no.1, 1970, pp.30-47.
- 96 Ngalimecha Ngahyoma, Kijiji Chetu, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975.
- 97 Ibid., p.iv.
- 98 Many songs, Ngonjera and poems were also composed during this time in which the leaders and especially Nyerere were praised profusely. Jazz band groups composed and made popular such songs as 'Mwalimu Nyerere', 'Maneno ya Nyerere' (The Words of Nyerere), 'Nyerere, Kenyatta, Obote', 'Baba Nyerere' (Father Nyerere), 'Nyerere na Karume' and countless other songs in which Nyerere was sung alongside the party and its ideology, ideas on self-reliance, Ujamaa, defence, liberation, nationalism, etc. These songs were made popular by such groups as NUTA/JUWATA, Mwenge, Morogoro Afro-70, Urafiki, Polisi and Kimulimuli Jazz bands. The songs are available at Radio Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam. For a further discussion on music and politics see K. Miti and H. Kahamba, 'Music and the Reproduction of State Ideology in Tanzania', Department of Political Science, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1982 (unpublished).

- 99 Kijiji Chetu, p.27.
- 100 Ibid., p.13.
- 101 I owe the information on the 'Canker' to the author and P.O. Muhando, as well as unpublished production notes, pictures and scenario descriptions held at the Department of Art, Music and Theatre, University of Dar-es-Salaam.
- 102 See Benjamin Letholoa Leshoai, 'Drama as a means of Education in Africa', Ph.D. thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1978, p.167.
- 103 F. Mziray, Walivyokuwa Wamelala, performed in 1974, University of Dar-es-Salaam (unpublished). See Figure 13.
- 104 1974 was the actual 20th anniversary of the founding of the Party, TANU.
- 105 F. Topan, A Taste of Heaven, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980. The Kiswahili version was published in 1973.
- 106 Ibid., p.19.
- 107 Ibid.
- 108 Ibid., p.viii.
- 109 Ibid., p.ix.
- 110 Ibid., pp.26-27.
- 111 Ibid., p.31.
- 112 Ibid., p.25.
- 113 Ngonjera is used for both the singular and plural form in Kiswahili.
- 114 On Mnyampala and his works see amongst others N.O. Mbagi, 'Ngonjera', M.A. thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1980; J.M. Mwangomango, 'Ngonjera za Ushairi', in Kiswahili Tol.41/2, Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili, Dar-es-Salaam, 1971, pp.67-71; D.P.B. Massamba, 'Utunzi wa Ushairi wa Kiswahili' in Fasihi, 1983, op.cit., pp.66-78; C.J. Williams, 'Mashairi y Mnyampala' in Farouk M. Topan, ed., Uchambuzi wa Maandishi ya Kiswahili, Dar-es-Salaam, 1971, pp.55-60;

M. Mnyampala, Diwani ya Mnyampala, Dar-es-Salaam, 1967, Ngonjera za Ukuta 1 & 2, Nairobi, 1968.

- 115 See Rashid M. Kawawa, Utangulizi in M. Mnyampala Ngonjera za Ukuta 1, p.2.
- 116 Forerunners of contemporary Ngonjera are discussed in amongst others Penina O. Mlama, 'The Role of Music in African Traditional Society', M.A. thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973; R. Kimani, Suala la Ushairi wa Kiswahili in Fasihi, 1983, op.cit., pp.127-143. Dialogue songs were found to be quite common amongst the Wapogoro of Morogoro Region when this writer was conducting research.
- 117 See Mohammed H. Abdulaziz, Muyaka: 19th Century Swahili Popular Poetry, Nairobi, 1979; also Massamba, 1983, op.cit.
- 118 See Mbag, 1980, op.cit.; Mwangomango, 1971, op.cit.
- 119 When talking to poets on 6th June 1968. See Dibaji, Ngonjera za Ukuta 1, p.3.
- 120 See Mnyampala, 1968, op.cit.
- 121 See Dibaji, Ngonjera za Ukuta 1.
- 122 Ibid. See also 'Ngonjera ni Kitu gani' in Ngonjera za Ukuta 1.
- 123 Ngonjera za Ukuta 1.
- 124 Ngonjera za Ukuta 2.
- 125 The Arusha Declaration.
- 126 Ngonjera za Ukuta 2, p.20.
- 127 Ngonjera za Ukuta 1.
- 128 Ibid.
- 129 See Mbag, 1980, op.cit.; S. Kandoro, Mashairi ya Saadani, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977; Ushahidi wa Mashairi ya Kiswahili, Nairobi, 1978; E. Kezilahabi, Kichomi, London, 1973; K. Kahigi na M. Mulokozi, Malenga wa Bora, Nairobi, 1976; Julius K. Nyerere na Mathias Mnyampala,

Mashairi y Hekima na Malumbano ya Ushairi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974. See also Appendix A for a representative sample of Ngonjera.

- 130 See Dibaji, Ngonjera za Ukuta 1.
- 131 Ngonjera za Ukuta 1. On Kiswahili prosody rhythms, meter, etc. see Mohammed H. Abdulaziz, 1979, op.cit., S. Chiraghdin, Introduction to A. Nassir, Malenga wa Mvita, 1971, and in Mwinyihatibu Mohamed, Malenga wa Mrima, Nairobi, 1977. Also S.A. Kibao, in Fasihi, op.cit., pp.96-113; Massamba, 1983, op.cit.
- 132 'Dakika Kumi na Tano za Uzalendo' in Kichomi, op.cit.
- 133 Ibid.
- 134 M. Muhando, 'Umoja ni Nguvu' in Usiku wa Furaha, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973, pp.4-7.
- 135 S.M.S. Kamba, 'TANU Imetenda Kazi' and Raphael Mkulia na Philbert Mbunda, 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa' in Zinduko, August 1974, Dar-es-Salaam, pp.36-40; 68-81.
- 136 See the following section of this chapter.
- 137 See 'Vijiji vya Ujamaa', p.68 as an example.
- 138 Ibid., p.76.
- 139 'Ngonjera' in Malenga wa Bara, op.cit., pp.43-49.
- 140 Ibid.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Abdilatif Abdalla, Sauti ya Dhiki, Nairobi, 1973, pp.17-22.
- 143 Ibid.
- 144 Ibid.
- 145 Some of the long Ngonjera aired by RTD between 1967 and 1984 have been 'Wafanyi Kazi Watashinda' (The Workers Will Triumph), 1979, 1½ hours long; 'Tutuvuna Tulichopanda' (We Shall Reap What We Have Sown) 1980, 4½ hours long; 'Mapambano' (Confrontation) 1982, 3½ hours long. For representative samples of Ngonjera produced for both

stage and radio between 1967 and 1984 see Appendix A.

- 146 Nipe Habari was created and performed on stage and radio in 1984 by the Dar-es-Salaam based Cultural troupe DDC Kibisa. I owe the script to the group and the tape to RTD.
- 147 See note 135.
- 148 See Abdilatif Abdalla, 'Utangulizi wa Mhariri' in Mashairi y Miaka Kumi ya Azimio La Arusha, UKUTA, Dar-es-Salaam, 1979, pp.5-6. The criticism usually covers not only Ngonjera but other forms of poetry as well.
- 149 See V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Vol.31, p.57.
- 150 M.M. Mulokozi, The Revolutionary Tradition in Swahili Poetry, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1974 (unpublished source). See also his 'Revolution and Reaction in Swahili Poetry', Kiswahili, Toleo la 45/2, Dar-es-Salaam, 1975 and 'Ushairi na Ukasuku', Kiswahili, Vol.47/2, September 1977. See also Clement L. Ndulute, 'Poetry and Politics of Change in East Africa, 1950-80: The Emergence of Radical Literature', Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, 1984.
- 151 See note 129.
- 152 Bob Leshoai who was head of Theatre Arts at the University of Dar-es-Salaam was quite enthusiastic about Ngonjera. See Leshoai, 1978, op.cit.
- 153 On the official directives on Nguvu Kazi, see Chapter 2.
- 154 From performances attended 1983/84. See Figures 15 & 16.
- 155 Lina Ubani and Ayubu are discussed in part 6 of this Chapter. For Giza Limeingia see section 3 of this Chapter.
- 156 The information in this section was obtained from attended performances, interviews, a questionnaire and available scenario descriptions from the groups - 28 in Dar-es-Salaam (see Appendix B), 5 in Dodoma, 3 in Korogwe and 4 in Mwanza.
- 157 On Commedia dell'Arte, see amongst others Allardyce Nicholl, The

World of Harlequin: a critical study of the
Commedia dell'Arte, Cambridge, 1963.

158. The group was DDC Kibisa Cultural Troupe which has become one of the most active groups in the country by 1984. I owe some of this information to Amri Ibrahim alias Amri Athumani who let me study his 'books' of scenario descriptions in 1983/84.
- 159 See Appendix B, nos. 2, 3, 4, 8.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 See Appendix B, no.1.
- 162 These are characters whose behaviour or outward appearance change little from plot to plot - a characteristic common in masquerades, mask dances, commedia dell'arte, etc. See Chapter 1 and note 157 above.
- 163 DDC Kibisa.
- 164 P.O. Mlama in Fasihi, op.cit., p.210.
- 165 J. Mollé, 'The Present Aspects and the Future of Educational Theatre in Post Arusha Declaration Tanzanian Primary Schools', Theatre Arts, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973 (unpublished special research paper).
- 166 See E.N. Hussein, 1975, op.cit., pp.96-99.
- 167 See Appendix C. The actual numbers of the groups in the country is not known since some don't bother to register or the Ministry of Internal Affairs responsible for registration has been unable to keep precise records. It was estimated by 1984, therefore, that there were for example 35 groups in Dar-es-Salaam, 3 in Korogwe, 5 in Dodoma and 5 in Mwanza. These numbers include groups who engage in composite performances or plays and excludes groups which specialize in one form such as taarab, traditional dances, music or choir. These have also increased in the period under investigation but were not the major focus of this study. For performances see Figures 2, 4, 17 & 18.

- 168 'Adui Ujinga' (also titled Adui Mjinga) as performed by the Tanganyika Textiles Drama Club.
- 169 The comparison was made between DDC Kibisa, Muungano and Lugalo Cultural Troupes on one hand, and Zinj, Baragumu and National Milling Corporation on the other.
- 170 One was 'Benki' cited in Appendix b, no.10 performed by Muungano and the other 'Ijuwe DDC' (Know DDC) by DDC Kibisa. See Figure 17.
- 171 Reported in The Daily News, March 16, 1984.
- 172 This was contained in a draft report '5 years and Projections' Part 3 section 4 article 1-3, 1984. I owe the draft's accessibility to F. Kangwa of VIJANA headquarters, Dar-es-Salaam.
- 173 The cultural troupes have also in recent years been performing with Jazz bands whose songs have contained much political and topical issues. On the Jazz bands and official ideology see K. Miti and H. Kahamba, op.cit.
- 174 K.J. Mchombu, 'Artists are not parrots', a review article in The Daily News, January 7, 1984.
- 175 Ibid.
- 176 See for example P.O. Mlana in Fasihi, op.cit., pp.183-193.
- 177 The workshop was held at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, November 28 - December 2, 1983 and was attended by this writer.
- 178 Airport Culture is that phenomenon in independent Africa where traditional performances are held at airports and elsewhere for tourists and visitors. While this practice has been frowned upon by some, others have defended it. One such defender has been Taban Lo Liyong. See his 'The Role of the Creative Artist in Contemporary Africa' in Chala, January 1969, pp.37-38.
- 179 See sections 3, 4 and 5 of this chapter.
- 180 Penina Muhando et al., Harakati za Ukombozi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982.

- 181 Paukwa Theatre Association, Ayubu, Kampala, 1984.
- 182 Penina Muhando, Nguzo Mama, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982.
- 183 Penina Muhando, Lina Ubani, Dar-es-Salaam, 1982 (unpublished).
It was in rehearsals in 1984 and first performance was February 1985.
- 184 E. Mbogo, Kilio Kisimani, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1979 (unpublished).
- 185 E. Kezilahabi, Kaputula la Marx, 1979 (unpublished).
- 186 Harakati, p.5. See also The Arusha Declaration, op.cit.
- 187 Ibid.
- 188 Ibid., p.13.
- 189 Ibid., pp.13-14.
- 190 Ibid., p.16.
- 191 Ibid., p.17.
- 192 See The Arusha Declaration (Part 5 resolution 5).
- 193 Ibid, p.12.
- 194 Ibid., p.23.
- 195 See Chapter 1.
- 196 See J. Mollé, 1979, op.cit., p.111.
- 197 Ayubu, p.8. See contrasting moods in Ayubu, Figures 19 & 20.
- 198 Ibid., pp.9-10.
- 199 Ibid., p.15.
- 200 Ibid., p.37.
- 201 Ibid., pp.37-38.
- 202 Ibid., p.7.
- 203 Ibid., pp.41-43.

- 204 Lina Ubani Scene 5 (from a production script, 1984).
- 205 Ibid., scene 6.
- 206 See Chapter 3.
- 207 See Wole Soyinka, Kongi's Harvest in Collected Plays 2, Oxford, 1974.
- 208 See note 182.
- 209 Nguzo Mama, p.4.
- 210 This characteristic of the clown is a familiar one and can also be found in such Shakespearean plays as King Lear.
- 211 See Muhanika, Njia Panda, Dar-es-Salaam.
- 212 E. Mbogo, Kilio Kisimani, 1979 (unpublished).
- 213 Tunda, an improvised play by the National Drama Troupe, 1981, while Chakatu was performed by the Bagamoyo School of Art, 1983/84. See Chapter 5.
- 214 See note 185.
- 215 Besides metaphors and symbols, the play also uses the device of multiple plots.
- 216 See amongst others the various articles in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, op.cit.

CHAPTER 5

THEATRE, NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

The practice of theatre in Tanzania has been greatly informed by specific efforts of the government and the Party which have tried to implement a national cultural policy and establish agencies to carry out cultural practice. These efforts can be seen in the official pronouncements concerning culture as well as in the development of institutions for culture generally and theatre specifically. The pronouncements and the agencies for culture have been part of the official attempts at 'cultural engineering'¹ and the establishment of a national cultural identity. These attempts, however, have existed alongside problems which have been the result of policy incoherency, lack of practical objectives and contradictions between pronounced goals and the actual practice leading to the attainment of the goals. While these problems underscore the conflict between intentions and commitment, their existence has been part of a pattern not uncommon in a country such as Tanzania. Cultural development has always been informed by the total developmental strategy which has not always favoured cultural endeavours. The struggle to meet the urgent needs of economic and political development has often resulted in official

reluctance to invest some resources to encourage activities seen as less of a priority.² This reluctance has also been the manifestation of official ambivalence regarding the specific cultural practices such as theatre and their role in national development.

1. Cultural Policy and the Ministry Responsible for Culture

There has been a continuing debate amongst cultural activists in Tanzania as to whether the country has a cultural policy or not. Louis Mbughuni has probably been the most outspoken spokesman of those who believe there has been a consistent cultural policy. Mbughuni who has been at various points of his career, a painter and academician, has also been the Director of Arts and National Language in the Ministry responsible for culture from 1980 to 1985.³ His views on cultural policy, however, can be traced back to the early seventies. In 1974, Mbughuni published a booklet entitled The Cultural Policy of the United Republic of Tanzania⁴ in which he asserts that 'we have a stated and clear national cultural policy'.⁵ He goes on to say that this policy is 'revolutionary and broad'. Mbughuni traces the foundation of this cultural policy from 1962 with the inauguration of the Ministry of National Culture and Youth. At that time President Nyerere had said:

I have set up this new Ministry to help us regain our pride in our culture. I want it to seek out the best of the traditions and customs of all our tribes and make them a part of our national culture ... I believe that culture is the essence and spirit of any nation. A country which lacks its own culture is no more than a collection of people without the spirit which makes them a nation.⁶

Mbughuni sees this as the backbone of Tanzania's cultural policy whose objective was to develop the 'Tanzanian nationalism and personality'. He lists six major points of this policy which includes the revival, promotion and development of traditions and customs as well as the contribution of these to national and world cultures.⁷ To prove that this policy has worked and been implemented, Mbughuni enumerates various activities and agents of culture which the Party and Government have instituted since 1962.⁸

During an interview in 1984, Mbughuni reasserted his earlier position by stating that Tanzania has had 'one of the most defined and highly developed cultural policies in the Third World Countries'.⁹

This claim was accompanied by a definition of what a policy is:

Any authoritative statement from an authoritative position in government that affects a large sector of a community.¹⁰

According to Mbughuni, such an authoritative statement has been given and its implementation has been taking place since 1962.

Mbughuni, however, has been challenged by, among others, Penina Mlama who has argued that there has been no such policy in existence. She has pointed out that whereas the Presidential 1962 speech indicated an 'intention', there was no specific cultural policy formulated then or after.¹¹ She has emphasized the point by saying:

There was no specific document stipulating what cultural policy would be in the light of Ujamaa policy. This was a mistake that was a consequence of the lack of clear understanding of culture and its role in the development of the society.¹²

This whole argument is a result of what individuals from both sides of the argument understand as factors needed to make up a policy.

Anderson has defined a policy as:

A set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors* concerning the selection of goals and means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve.¹³

This definition negates policy as being either a single decision or wishes of individuals or groups. Neither the existence of an authoritative statement nor the quantity of people affected makes a policy complete. It is rather a pattern of actions extending over time, involving decisions, goals, ways and means of achieving objectives. When evaluating a policy, therefore, both the content and the process of the policy need to be analyzed - the methods, strategies, techniques as well as the substance of policy and its projected impact on its particular target. Both Mbughuni and Mlama argue from the point of view of output and intention but differ in their interpretation of these. Whereas Mbughuni sees the stated intentions of party and government to constitute a decisive policy, Mlama distinguishes these intentions from authoritative decisions which a policy needs. Both agree that the government has initiated certain cultural activities in the last two decades. Mbughuni sees these activities as consistent with planned objectives while Mlama interprets them as a result of inconsistency and lack of an authoritative decision. Both, however, fail to substantiate their arguments convincingly.

* By 'actors' Anderson means activators or those who 'act' as a political functionary group and this should not be confused with actors in the theatre.

Whereas Mbughuni fails to link the political intentions to specific strategies and this in turn to cultural output, Mlama does not analyse how and why the contradictions exist between the 'non-authoritative' decisions and output. Neither is concerned with the impact of all these in the targeted population. Whether Tanzania has a cultural policy or not needs to be a speculation which evaluates not only outputs and decisions but also demands and impact of cultural practice as well as the other factors which constitute policy.

What emerges clearly from the situation in Tanzania are two basic facts. First of all, the statements on culture and its 'policy' have come usually from the Party rather than the government. Secondly, what has been accepted as national cultural policy has been neither consistent nor complete. Those invested with the task of implementing it have not always understood it or translated it coherently. The structure and development of the Ministry responsible for Culture since 1962 and especially after 1967 exhibits some of the factors surrounding the efforts to institute a policy as well as official practice in culture.

In its twenty years of existence, the Ministry of Culture has had a turbulent history. The administrative apparatus was set up in 1962 with the objectives cited above by Mbughuni. No strategy, however, was mapped out to indicate the particular means and ways of accomplishing these. This set a pattern which was to be followed in subsequent years - objectives were stated but no methods proposed. In 1964, the then Ministry of National Culture and Youth became the Ministry of

Community Development and Culture. The objectives remained the same - 'the development of Tanzanian nationalism and personality through the promotion of our own cultural activities'. This was followed in 1965 by the publication of an official government paper through the Ministry which stated:

The main objective of the National Culture Division is to assist in the development of Tanzanian Nationalism and personality by the promotion of cultural activities. Our political and economic independence will not be a reality if Tanzania remains dominated by outside cultural forces. The development of Tanzanian culture should, therefore, be given due weight in the total national effort.¹⁴

These objectives were repeated by Rashid M. Kawawa, who emphasized the need to offset the colonial attitudes towards traditional cultures.¹⁵ The major activities given emphasis at this time, therefore, were traditional dances and the promotion of Kiswahili as a national language.

In 1968, right after the Arusha Declaration, the administrative structure of the Ministry of Culture changed again, this time becoming the Ministry of Regional Administration and Rural Development and Culture. This lasted for only a year and in the following year, Culture became part of the Ministry of Education. The changing structure of the Ministry of Culture was a symptom of the struggle to find coherency and direction for artistic activities. It was also an example of how 'expert' advice was affecting governmental planning and activities. The McKinsey report was a case in point.¹⁶ In 1973 the McKinsey draft report strongly recommended that culture should be part of the Ministry of Education. Three reasons were given to support the

recommendation:

- a) because of the close link between culture and education in both the techniques and approaches;
- b) because of the reliance of cultural activities on facilities provided by education and the merger would minimize both the economic and personnel demands required by cultural programmes;
- c) because of the necessity to coordinate education with other activities important to national development.¹⁷

But by the time the final McKinsey report was published in 1975, the above economic, educational and administrative justifications were abandoned and Culture emerged as the new Ministry of National Culture and Youth. The McKinsey report of 1975 rationalized the move thus:

it had been realized that the administrative and resource savings that the government had intended to achieve from the amalgamation of education and culture, were not forthcoming, because the national education programmes required the full attention of Education and its resources.¹⁸

There is no indication in the report as to why culture needed to get its own attention. All the reasons given to justify the separation of culture from education were given from the point of view of education - culture was a heavy burden on the educational system.¹⁹

The McKinsey report had another long term effect on the arts. The McKinsey Commission was more interested in establishing administrative structures rather than specific programmes which these structures could undertake. This meant that activities and programmes already in existence found more favour in the restructuring of the Ministries. New programmes had a harder task of taking off. Activities such as sports, for example, continued to develop throughout the various changes while the performing arts which have always had a weaker

foundation continued to flounder and at times remained neglected.

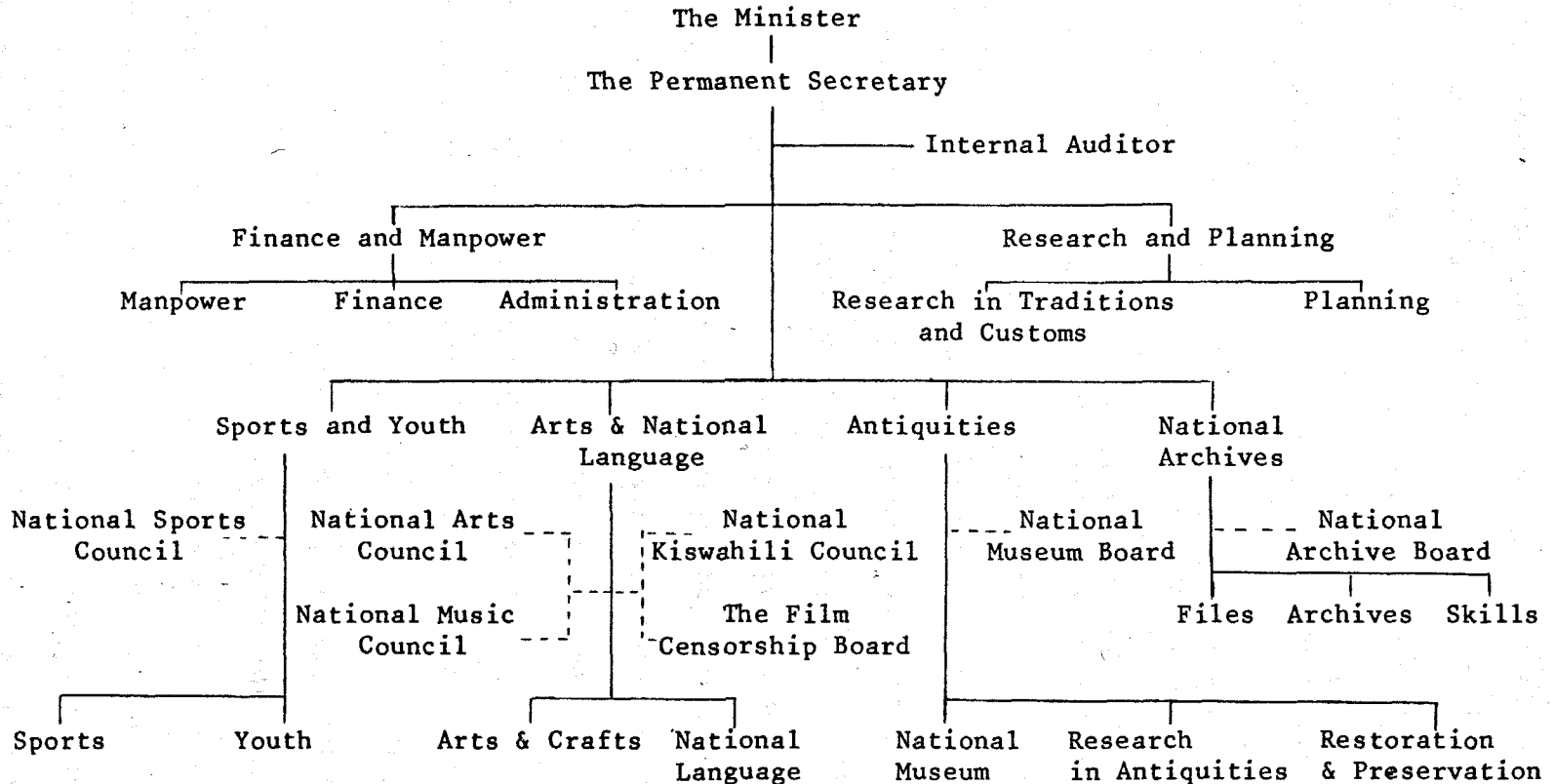
The 1974 Ministerial reorganization brought into existence six departments or 'Directorates' and various councils responsible for specific cultural activities.²⁰ Working through the Directorates and Councils, the Ministry focussed its attention on the revival of traditional customs²¹, arts and crafts as well as sports. To ensure that cultural activities had 'the necessary impact', competitions were encouraged at the national, regional and district levels. It was not until the ministerial organization of 1980, however, that the competitions received the moral and financial support to make them the 'cultural programme' envisioned by the Ministry. In that year, culture was reorganized into the Ministry of Information and Culture and four years later, in 1984, culture was put under the Prime Minister's Office.²²

While all these ministerial changes have made it difficult to focus on any long term plans by the top officials, there were functionaries within the ministerial structure who were supposed to ensure continuity of the national cultural objectives. The McKinsey reports had recommended the creation of cultural officers' posts from regional to village levels. The officers were to act as a link between the Ministry and local cultural activities. The Ministry's role in relation to the cultural officers was defined as:

To provide guidance, advice and technical assistance to regional cultural officers who are organizationally responsible to their Regional Development Directors but who will, however, look to the Ministry for assistance in discharging their responsibilities e.g. in designing new projects and implementing experimental programmes.²³

Chart 1

Organization of the Ministry of National Culture and Youth: 1980



Source: The Ministry of National Culture and Youth, Dar-es-Salaam

By March 1984, there were 21 Regional Cultural Officers, 99 at the district and division levels, 147 at the Ministry's headquarters and the Bagamoyo School of Arts.²⁴ The Ministry has targeted itself to have 618 officers and the present number is obviously still far from the target. With the allocation of only 2 cultural officers to the regions during the 1984/85 financial year, one can assume that it will take the Ministry a long time before it can achieve its target.

The number of cultural officers present differs from region to region. Morogoro, for example, had in 1984, 9 officers while Dodoma had 15 from the regional to village levels. At each level, the cultural officers are divided between those who have general administrative functions concerning all the cultural activities in their areas and those with responsibilities for one cultural activity. The functions of these officers have been from time to time outlined by the Ministry. During the 1980/81 financial year the functions of the regional and district cultural officers responsible for theatre were outlined and they can be summarized in three categories:

1. To do research and collect data on theatre groups, literature and personalities.
2. To prepare and oversee theatre performances in their areas during celebrations, competitions and special occasions.
3. To conduct workshops and seminars on theatre for groups, schools and youth.²⁵

The cultural officers are assisted in their work by general committees on culture as well as specific committees on theatre. Besides these, there are also Party Cultural Committees which are supposed to perform

advisory and supervisory functions.²⁶

The officers, however, have been plagued by problems which have made their work difficult and at times ineffectual. Lack of coordination and support, incompetency, lack of skills, and the nature of the bureaucratic system they work under, are some of the problems they face. During a seminar in 1976, many of the officers who attended expressed uncertainty about the work they were expected to do and the lack of cooperation from local authorities.²⁷

In all the areas visited during the research for this study (1983/84), cultural officers complained about lack of moral and financial support as well as lack of seriousness and interest on the part of Regional and District political functionaries. Only a few of the officers knew what they were supposed to do and all harboured frustrations and helplessness towards their responsibilities. They were, for the most part, unprepared for their jobs because of lack of training. Lack of personnel in most areas made the few officers present stretch their energies into too many activities rendering them ineffective. While most of those interviewed (2 out of 3) thought there was a national cultural policy, few could formulate the nature of the policy or what their role in it was.²⁸

The leadership at the Ministerial level concede that the skills and experiences of cultural officers leave a lot to be desired.²⁹ There is lack of concensus, however, when the leaders express their views regarding the type of training and experience cultural officers must have to perform their duties effectively. Mbughuni thinks that

training should aim at creating 'animateurs in the arts to work in the regions'.³⁰ Others, however, have expressed the desire to create two types of cultural officers:

The District or Regional cultural officers are administrators who need to be prepared generally in the arts. They are like the Principal Secretaries of the Regions and Districts. Those who work with and under them, however - those responsible for theatre, art music, etc. - will need to be specialists and competent in their fields. These will need to be professionals.³¹

The Ministry has depended on training its officers at such institutions as the College of Arts, now in Bagamoyo, the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Butimba National College of Education. All these institutions, however, have not managed to provide adequate manpower nor appropriate ones. One reason lies in the Ministry's own delay in making clear what type of training it requires for its officers as exemplified by the two points of view above. The institutions train according to their own objectives and the Ministry rarely gets someone who is prepared and meets their criteria. Asked whether his training at the University of Dar-es-Salaam had prepared him to be a cultural officer, one graduate answered:

There are no complaints in so far as the theoretical part of my training. I feel that I can go anywhere and be in any situation and will be able to hold my own ... As far as the practical side is concerned, that's another matter. I lack the confidence which comes from practical training and experience ... I feel inadequate to organize or help in matters of dance, drama, music etc. I did not have enough preparation for that.³²

The programme in theatre at the University of Dar-es-Salaam does include practical work in theatre production, dance and music but obviously a different type of programme is needed for cultural officers

and so far neither the Ministry nor the University has come up with an answer. The recent activities of the School of Arts in Bagamoyo, however, seem to point towards the direction which the Ministry wants its officers to be trained.³³

Cultural activities in Tanzania have also been affected by agencies besides the Ministry responsible for culture, i.e. the National Councils and the Party. When the government created two Councils, one for Music and one for Fine Art, in 1974, no such organization was created for the performing arts. That meant theatre activities did not have a semi-autonomous body to look after its affairs outside the ministerial structure. Nor did theatre have access to the yearly supplementary funds allocated to these bodies by the government. Partly because of the need to include the performing arts in the councils (after numerous complaints) and partly because of the inefficiencies and lack of dynamism in the two existing councils, the government introduced a bill late in 1984 to abolish these and create one National Arts Council which will represent art, music and theatre.³⁴ The new council will inherit all the functions of its predecessors as well as expanding it to including 'drama, dance, singing, poetry and music'. It will act as a clearing house on information and activities concerning all the arts and advise the government about these activities.³⁵ The new council, however, is not inheriting a good record from the previous two. While they existed, the councils did little for the development of their particular art forms. Activities performed under their auspices were minimal. They

usually made headlines when dealing with their most conspicuous function - setting fees for entertainment. Since, the National Music Council, for example, received substantial revenue from these, it tried to ensure that high fees were paid for entertainment. In March 1984, both the Party Secretary and the then Minister for Culture spoke against commercialization of the arts. They warned that 'commercialization of cultural activities should be discouraged as the mode was contrary to socialism'.³⁶ Not only that, but people had been complaining about the exorbitant entry fees at places of entertainment. A few weeks later, the National Music Council raised entry fees at all places of entertainment - an action which did not endear it to either the leaders or the people.³⁷ The inclusion of theatre in the new Council, however, is a step forward. It is, on one hand, an overdue recognition of the performing arts and the support they need from semi official agencies; and on the other hand, the move will open doors to more financial aid to develop theatre.

The Party (first TANU and now CCM) has been an important factor in cultural development. As of June 1984, Party officials claimed that there was no official section within the Party which deals with culture. A proposed department had not started by that time.³⁸ But as early as 1969, however, the Central Committee of the Party divided itself up into four sub-committees and one of them was for Cultural Affairs. The committee was to 'oversee the presence of the Party at all levels within society'.³⁹ This was followed in 1970, by a Party sponsored seminar whose deliberations and recommendations were then forwarded to

the Central Committee. Guidelines were then formulated and endorsed during the 15th Party Congress in 1971.⁴⁰ The supremacy of the Party on cultural affairs received a reemphasis during the congress:

Because the Party has the responsibility of ensuring that the people govern their everyday life, the congress resolves that from now on the Party must participate in all cultural activities.⁴¹

This message was reiterated during the 16th Party Congress and by the Party Executive Committee in 1976.⁴² The pronouncements by the Party, however, were not accompanied by any programme or practical proposals to develop culture. What was accomplished then and after was a reemphasis on the Party's role in providing ideological guidelines to all cultural activities and performing the role of censor to such activities as the theatre. The Party has then depended on the national leadership to continue reminding performers, for example, that the theatre should 'inspire the people to attain political and economic liberation within their environment'.⁴³ As overseer of cultural activities, the party's function has usually been carried out by its affiliated mass organizations such as the Youth Organization and the various party cultural committees at the grassroot levels.

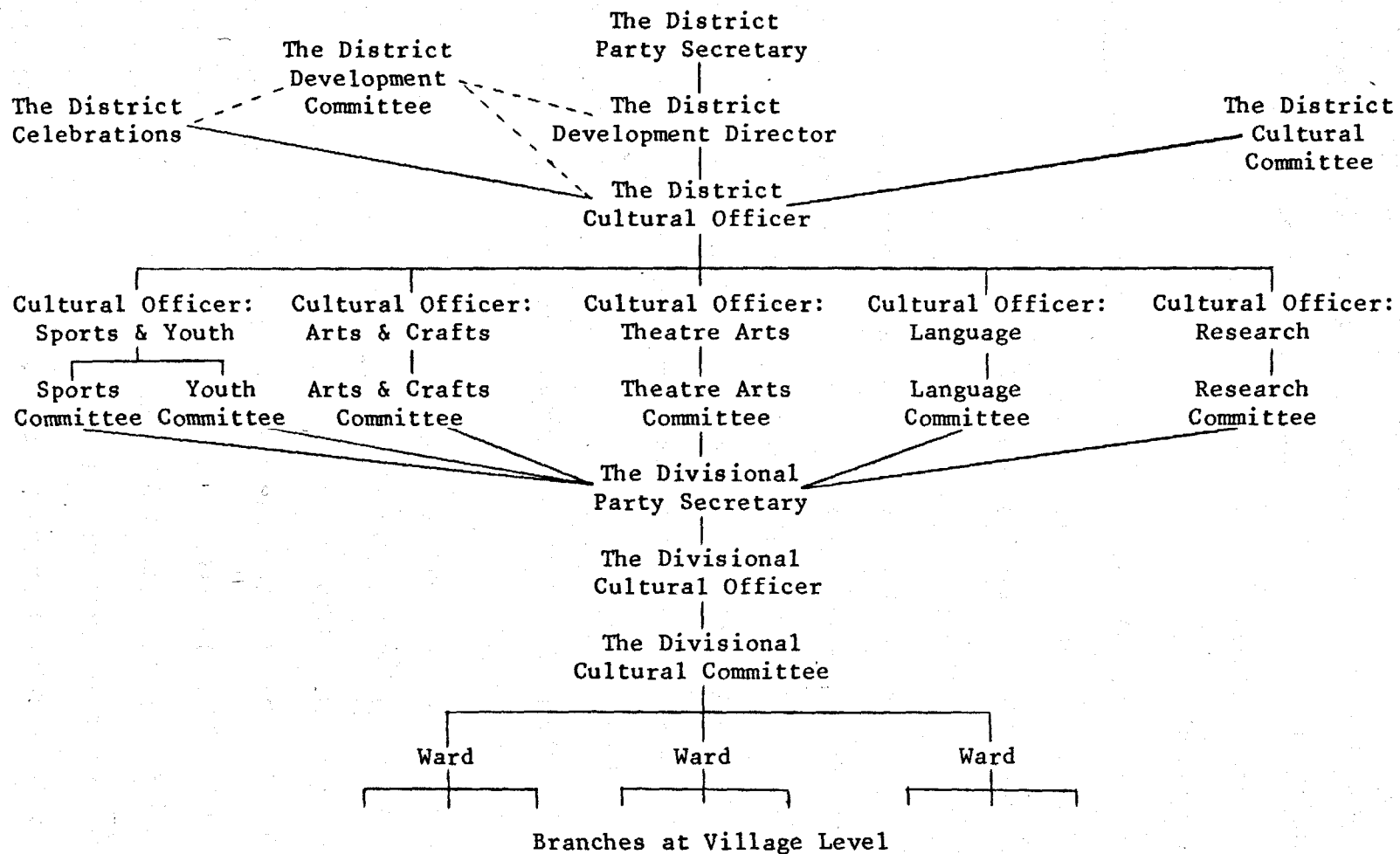
Because of the dominating position of the Party within the body politic, certain attitudes seem to have entrenched themselves. Since the party has supported culture more through its rhetoric than any other practical involvements, official agents and functionaries have always tended to follow the practice. Ideological approval has been sought directly or indirectly so that official viewpoints will not be misinterpreted or the functionaries involved face political repercussions.

A case in point was the involvement of a couple of cultural officers with the production of Ayubu.⁴⁴ When the play was chosen to go to Tripoli, Libya, to participate in the 1983 Second Pan African Youth Festival, cultural officers were sent to work with Paukwa Theatre Group to act as liaison between the group and the state. Because of the content of the play, these cultural officers distanced themselves as far as possible from the group so that they would not be seen to be part of the critical attitudes represented in the play. When the General Secretary of the Party, Rashid M. Kawawa saw the play and applauded it, the cultural officers did not only feel safe to publicly show their involvement but also to claim as much credit as they could for their contributions to the production.

The thin line that divides Party policy, ideology and bureaucracy from government operations acts as a stumbling block in cultural development for two reasons. First, the weaknesses of one tend to be duplicated in the other and the overlapping of functions mystifies the roles in each sector. Second, in most cases, the functionaries have tended to be the same in both Party and government systems. In spite of this diffusion between Party and Government, there has been lack of coordination and integration resulting at times in contradictory practices towards similar goals.⁴⁵ Moreover, Party functionaries are more often than not interested in those activities which they can exploit for their own political ends. The aesthetic consideration of the arts, for example, find little consideration in the politicians' evaluation of cultural expression.

Chart 2

Cultural Organization and Administration at the District Level, 1980



Source: Ministry of National Culture and Youth, Dar-es-Salaam

Another problem facing the development of Culture including the theatre has been financial. In spite of the stated intentions to develop a national culture, government spending on cultural activities has been relatively little. This fact has persisted since 1967. Culture receives the least allocation not only from the national yearly budget but also within the Ministries responsible for culture. The Regional development Budget for 1984/85, for example, was estimated to be Tsh. 830,900,000, out of which Tsh. 1,694,000 or 0.2% was allocated to cultural development.⁴⁶ The actual spending and estimates during a three year period within the Ministry in which culture is located shows the same trend. In 1984/85 culture was allocated 0.56% of the total budget in the Prime Minister's Office. The government also allocated subsidiary funds to assist cultural groups not necessarily under government control. Between 1982 and 1985, the government gave a subsidy of Tsh. 20,000 for each budget year.⁴⁷ Besides the fact that the amount was too small, the money only occasionally reached those it was meant for. Out of 20 groups interviewed, only 5 knew the existence of the subsidy or had applied for it. Usually the Ministry diverts the money to its other activities e.g. to cover travelling costs for visiting foreign cultural troupes or for its officials.

Over the years, both the government and the Ministry has devoted a lot of time and financial investment into sports. More money was given during the First and Second Five Year Plans to activities dealing with sports than any other activity under the Ministry. More than

half of the Ministry's allocation towards cultural development in the period 1980-1985 has gone to sports while recurrent budgets for sports and the arts in that period has been 0.86% and 0.56% respectively.⁴⁸ There have been justifiable complaints, therefore, about official bias for sports and against other activities of culture.⁴⁹

The Ministry, however, especially since 1980 has not been without specific plans to develop theatre in the country. In 1981, the Ministry drew an ambitious 20 year plan for the development of theatre and the other arts. Besides consolidating the training and provision of cultural officers to all regions, theatres and opera houses were planned to be built, professional companies were to be started at Regional and District areas.⁵⁰ Typically, the plan was accompanied by no specific strategies and ways of accomplishing the objectives. The plan was both unrealistic and not quite serious. With the government's record of financial support for the arts, it was unrealistic to expect that it would support such a grandiose plan at a time when it was facing an economic crisis. The expectation to get outside help could not have been a strong supportive argument either. Since 1972, for example, the Ministry has tried to interest donors to build a theatre hall in Dar-es-Salaam. By the end of 1984, the blue prints for the project were still collecting dust in the Ministry's files.⁵¹ The envisioned Cultural Institute planned since 1968 has not met with outside encouragement either.⁵² Later pronouncements from government leaders provided some insight as to how the plan could be implemented. In 1982, the then Minister of Information and Culture called upon public

institutions, businessmen and industrialists to boost artistic activities through moral and material contributions. He exhorted them to embark upon concrete programmes such as 'the construction of regional art theatres'.⁵³ The sentiment was echoed by the Prime Minister in mid 1984 when he called upon the Dar-es-Salaam City Council to build a Cultural Centre in the city for the provision of entertainment and generation of income. Voluntary services as well as cooperation from institutions and individuals were recommended as the best way to realize the project.⁵⁴ The leaders' comments, however, were not linked to the 20 year plan. The 20 year plan proposed the building of different performance areas for music, opera, dance and plays while the two leaders were concerned with multi-purpose performing areas and may have been prompted by immediate rather than long term needs as contained in the plan.

If, however, the Ministry wanted to put the responsibility of implementing the plan on the people, the devising of the plan did not take this into consideration. The people themselves would have been involved in deciding what types of performing areas they needed and wanted - no such democracy was exercised prior or during the planning. It would have been wiser to have the people in the areas decide and devise projects according to their capabilities and needs. An opera house in Dodoma may be a prestigious building as a national possession but it may not be what the people there want or are able to build through self help. The people might opt for more realistic choices.

The plan is already five years behind schedule, at least in so

far as theatre is concerned and seems destined to go the way of other cultural plans, in the dust files.

Besides the twenty year cultural plan the period between 1980 and 1984 saw the inauguration and development of the Ministry's Cultural Programme. It was not only theoretically defined but vigorously implemented. A review of the Cultural Programme is important because of two factors. It represents an official attempt at investing in cultural development. The aesthetic and organizational problems of the cultural programme, however, point to some limitations of the approach in cultural development.

2. The Cultural Programme: Organization and Participation

The Cultural Programme launched in 1980 was the Ministry's answer to cultural development through competitions.⁵⁵ Competitions, however, were not a new phenomenon in Tanzania. Officially, they had been pursued since after the Arusha Declaration. What was new was the zeal and enthusiasm which the Ministry has shown in implementing the competitions since 1980. The programme was supposed to be tried in Dar-es-Salaam first prior to 1980 but this never took place. It was during the 1980/81 period that the programme saw its first trial run. Each zone was assigned particular activities to compete in. So, theatre arts were competed in both Dar-es-Salaam and Tanga, music in Coast and Lake, language arts in Central and arts and crafts were competed in the South. In 1982, the Ministry abandoned this plan and adopted one in which each zone would compete in all the arts. This plan began

formally during the 1982/83 period but only three zones managed to hold theirs during 1983/84 and the national competitions were held in September 1984 in Dar-es-Salaam.

The rationale behind the programme has been outlined by L.A. Mbughuni who has been the force behind its implementation. The objectives can be summarized as follows:

1. To provide entertainment for the people and build a spirit of appreciation which wants to see, buy and value art.
2. To build a spirit of cooperation and competition amongst artists as well as give them an incentive to develop skills. At the same time the artists will learn from each other.
3. To provide a venue for cultural officers to meet and exchange views.
4. To advertise, develop as well as preserve cultural heritage.⁵⁶

The competitions group drama, dance and acrobatics as theatre arts. The Ministry is supposed to send out competition guidelines, choose the judges and prepare the awards at the zonal and national competitions. It also charts out the guidelines for the judges to make their evaluation from as well as provide the finance to cover the costs of the events. All these factors have had an impact on the type of activities presented and the reasons why certain groups have won and others have not. In drama, the guidelines stipulate the length of the play - 45 minutes, with 5 minutes allowance for changes - but more importantly, the relevance of the play to contemporary Tanzanian reality.

Figures 21-24: Performances at the National Cultural Competitions, DSM, 1984.



Figure 21: Mnyonge Hana Haki, Western Zone.



Figure 22: Adui Mjinga, Eastern Zone.



Figure 23: Tutashinda, Lake Zone.



Figure 24: Mkuki wa Urithi, Southern Highlands Zone.

How important the competitors see the item of relevance to their entries can be seen in the choice of plays which were presented for the national competitions in 1984. All the six plays dealt directly or indirectly with issues of relevance to Tanzania. Problems of illiteracy were portrayed in Adui Mjinga (The Enemy is Ignorance), liberation struggles in Tutashinda, and Ukombozi wa Mwafrika (We Shall Win and The Liberation of the African, respectively); war against corruption, exploitation and oppression in Ulanguzi (Racketeering) and Mnyonge Hana Haki (The Poor Man has no Rights), and the need for unity in Mkuki wa Urithi (The Inherited Spear).⁵⁷ Political and social relevance was also a major factor in the plays at the zonal competitions from which the above plays had emerged the winners. Theme relevance sometimes overshadowed other elements in performance and became the sole criteria for awarding a play as a winner. In the Western zone, for example, the play which won - Tutashinda - was deemed inferior in its theatricality to another play, Udhalimu wa Jenerali Kigongo (The Fascism of General Kigongo). Although theatrically exciting with many innovative ideas, Jenerali Kigongo's theme of fascism was seen as less relevant to Tanzania than Mnyonge Hana Haki's theme about current topical oppression.⁵⁸

Part of the relevance of the plays was shown through a shared approach which strongly supported and underlined propagated official values and attitudes of the ruling political hegemony.⁵⁹ In isolated cases such as in Mnyonge Hana Haki, criticisms of minor officials and their activities were projected but these were generally mild and quite

acceptable by the national leadership. Besides this approach, the six plays shared two other characteristics as well: lack of experimentation and simplicity. For the most part, experimentation was avoided - a common characteristic in Tanzanian competitions. Two of the six plays tried to use non-dramatic models (Mkuki wa Urithi and Ukombozi wa Mwafrika) and one (Tutashinda) tried to use a mixture of styles. It was elements of conventional drama, however, which received the most attention in these plays and especially in the other three plays. Besides this, lack of experimentation was evidenced in another feature - a reliance on plays previously proven winners elsewhere. Half of the plays entered had been around for some time and had been in competitions before, e.g. Adui Mjinga (1974), Tutashinda (1980) and Mkuki wa Urithi (1981). Common in the plays also, was the choice for simplicity rather than complexity in the development of the thematic content and the presentation. The conflicts in the plays were simple, between the good and evil people. The major concern was the clarity of the content and the message rather than dialectics. Dramatic tension was therefore minimal while political and social statements dominated to underscore the political and moral intentions. Fights and heated exchanges were often the indicators of a crisis, climax or a resolution. At the same time the build towards emotional tension was interrupted by elements of comedy and exaggeration. All these were executed on a stage which was for the most part bare with minimum props and stage scenery. Real objects and imaginary ones were used sometimes simultaneously. It was not uncommon, therefore, to see real

food cooked over firewood with no fires or representational houses alongside real beds and mimed other objects. The acting followed a similar pattern where playing out to the audience was interspersed with moments of realistic scenes. This mixture of elements in the presentations was partly the result of utilizing only the available materials and skills which the competitors had and partly due to the constraints of time which the performers were allowed to use. Most tried to avoid the approach taken by Ulanguzi in which cumbersome realistic props and a real stage house necessitated changes which made the production look clumsy and interrupted the rhythms and unity of the play. The play was short but the changes took so much time that the production lost competition points. These were factors which another play - Tutashinda - tried to avoid in spite of the fact it too used elaborate settings. The play was performed by the Butimba College of National Education. The training and available theatre skills of the Butimba performers were displayed in their use of an elaborate constructed stage, costumes including painted masks, props specially made for each scene and meticulously detailed characterizations. This sophistication in the presentation set the group apart, but the fact that Tutashinda did not win points to the criteria for winning as being other than slickness in production. The aesthetic considerations of the plays, however, cannot be totally evaluated outside the aesthetic and social goals of the competitions as well as the factors which surround their attainment.

One of the major rationales behind the cultural programme is to make the cultural competitions forums for exchanges of ideas, skills

and learning. This objective can no doubt be achieved given certain conditions but it seems problematic within the cultural programme as it has existed since 1980. At the zonal and national competitions, for example, the event lasts from two to four days. Some participants from each zone or region perform in more than one event. At the same time the need to win creates such nervous fevers that rehearsals for events are held until just before actual performances. Both these factors limit the chances for participants to meet, exchange and learn from each other. There are no workshops or seminars within the competition programmes to bring the performers formally together. Rarely do the performers have a chance to talk to the judges and get feedback on their performances.

Questions can also be raised regarding the type of judges used for the competitions. Before the national competitions, all the zonal competition judges were Ministry personnel chosen because of cost saving considerations rather than theatrical competency. In three zonal competitions, the judges' skills and competency became such a big issue that the Minister responsible for culture suspended all competitions until after an investigation was held. The judges, however, have not been helped by the evaluation criteria devised by the Ministry. It is vague in parts, confusing in others and seems to have left out a consideration of important elements of drama. For example, the highest points under one item a play can score (25%) is something which appears as 'the success of the play in achieving its goal'. In view of the fact that what the performers and designers of a play want

and the final object observed and perceived can be totally different, the item is ambiguous. This is especially so because neither the judges nor the audience are told what the initial intention is. The attempt to create a uniform criterion for forms that defy uniformity has created problems in the dance performances also. The judges have found it difficult to assess dances which use neither drums nor songs in an evaluation criterion which assumes that all dances would have such items in them. Or how do they assess a dance performed by snakes while the humans provide just the scenery. Another problem has stemmed out of the categorization the forms received. Ngonjera, for example, which should have been put under the performance section has always been included in the language arts. The performance elements have been so strong that they have overshadowed the linguistic parts. This has done little to help the judges or to encourage Ngonjera as a form of theatre. Story-telling has also been put under language arts. Not only have the themes been similar in all the stories but the categorization has discouraged the performers from putting on a performance. Moreover, the interpretations of the assessment have not been consistent from region to region. In 1984, Mwanza Region, for example, was discouraged from too much dramatization of their dances during the zonal competitions. The Region was quite angry to find out that the group which was declared winner capitalized in the very items it was told to leave out.

The most limiting factor in the competitions, however, is the constraints they put on experimentation and creative imagination. The

desire to win is so strong that it leaves no room for risks or new ventures. Groups feel safer with already proven successful productions or familiar mediums of expression rather than attempting unfamiliar grounds. Even when the groups are willing to incorporate new effective elements learned from others, officials in charge of the performances are not that flexible. The desire to win overshadows any aesthetic considerations. In 1984, when the performers of Adui Mjinga wanted to substitute an old scenario for a new one because it would endow the performance with a fresh dynamism, the officials rejected the change arguing that the play had won at previous zonal competitions just as it was.

Two other factors need to be looked at which affect the productions - material and financial support as well as the whole organizational structure which is supposed to make the competitions possible. The competitions are supposed to start from the village and the wards and progress through the divisions, districts, regions, zones and finally the national one. The government allocated Tsh. 2,000,000 in 1983 for the competitions.⁶⁰ This, however, was to cover only the zonal and national events. Local funding had to cover competitions at the lower levels. In the six regions visited, local cultural officers complained about lack of financial support as a major obstacle to the local competitions. Unless the offices of the Development Director provide the funds (as in the case of Dodoma Region) competitions are difficult to hold and groups which go to compete at the zonal levels are handpicked (as in the case of Tanga Region). The Ministry blames

the Development Directors for failing to submit yearly estimates which include costs for the competitions.⁶¹ But this overlooks the fact that pressed with budget cuts, the Development Directors are not enthusiastic to inflate their budgets by including the Cultural Programme. Cultural activities, especially those imposed from outside their major interests do not receive enthusiastic support. During the 1984/85 budget year, for example, only 8 out of the 20 mainland regions submitted estimates for cultural development.⁶² The financial problems are also aggravated by scheduling changes. In Tanga Region, for example, the time-table for the competitions changed so many times that by the time the actual competitions took place, districts like Kirogwe had exhausted their funds. Instead of competing, groups were handpicked by the cultural officers.⁶³

The government funds allocated for the zonal and national competitions seem not to have been used wisely. Neither the treatment of the artists nor the conditions of the events provided any evidence that the money was used appropriately. There were complaints from both the performers and some observers about the treatment of the participants during the Eastern, Western and Southern Highlands' zonal competitions. Writing in Uhuru, Madanga S. Madanga pointed out:

Maybe it would be wise to look at the environment in which the artists had to compete. Many artists were displeased by the accommodation and food prepared for them. They had to sleep on the floor and sometimes men were mixed with women and others had to share two to a mattress.⁶⁴

There were many participants who faced expulsion from their hotels for non-payment of rent but neither a demonstration nor threats of with-

drawing from the competitions helped to change matters. While competition participants were crammed in unhygienic hotels and stadium cubicles, Party and Ministry officials stayed at the most expensive and comfortable hotels. After the Morogoro fiasco, the competition organizers seemed to have repeated the same mistakes at the events which followed.⁶⁵ It was this which prompted the cultural officers from the Western zone to recommend:

The cost of running the competitions should be given to the regions and the Ministry should not oversee the purchasing of commodities as it did in Morogoro, Lindi and Tabora.⁶⁶

It was partly due to the complaints on the mismanagement of funds which led to the temporary suspension of the competitions by the Minister in March 1984.⁶⁷

At the grassroot level, there is little possibility that all villages can be mobilised to participate in the competitions. Tanzania is estimated to have 8,215 villages at different levels of development.⁶⁸ The cultural officers at the district and regional levels have neither the resources nor the knowledge to make it possible for villages to compete. Only in Dodoma Region, for example, did the officers have complete information of cultural organization in the villages. There is no uniformity of cultural organization in the villages. Ideally, each village is supposed to have cultural troupes organized under the guidance of the Education or Culture and Social Welfare Committees. Again, only in Dodoma Region could permanent cultural troupes be found in most villages. In other areas like Morogoro, Tanga and Mwanza, the situation was mixed with some villages

having permanent troupes while others created temporary troupes as occasions warranted. Contact between these villages and the cultural officers is limited, making availability of the information on the competitions hard to come by. Moreover, the times chosen for the competitions are not always convenient for peasants since they sometimes interfere with such peasant activities as planting, weeding or harvesting. The possibility of participation in the competitions can depend also on the level of economic development of a village. Those economically better off villages can afford to invest in their own performing troupes while others depend on official financial support. All these factors put a limitation on the number of villages which can participate in the cultural programme.

the lack of / The cultural programme suffers also from ^ha clear definition as to who can and cannot compete. There are no parameters as to artistic competency, experience, types of organizations or individuals. The result has been that on one hand, a mixture of groups and individuals at different levels of artistic development have competed for the same events, and on the other hand, the most competent and dynamic activities present in the country have not been part of the competitions.⁶⁹ For example, in Dar-es-Salaam Region no cultural groups from the Defence Forces were allowed to compete while in places like the Coast, Dodoma and Kigoma Regions the Forces were strongly represented. School children formed a large contingent of some regions while in others they were totally excluded.

It has also become clear that some of the most active groups in

theatre in the country have not been participating in the competitions. In future, the Ministry might look into not only providing specific goals and workable guidelines for the competitions but might also adopt a non-competitive festival approach to the cultural programme. If the objective is cultural development through greater participation and development of skills, then a festival atmosphere with inbuilt mechanisms for exchange of ideas and skills might be more profitable.

Besides the cultural programme, the Ministry has also been involved in providing specific training for the arts as well as supporting national cultural troupes. The following section looks at the development, output, political and aesthetic factors surrounding the existence of National Drama Troupe and the College of Arts.

3. Theatre Development and the National Drama Troupe

The organization, practice as well as the political rationale for officially sponsored professional cultural groups provides a study which has two historical phases: 1963 to 1980 and 1981 to 1984. The first phase saw the establishment of the National Cultural troupes, their shaky development which led to their disbandment; their second phase is the period where National Cultural troupes were totally replaced by the activities of the College of Arts. While certain political and aesthetic objectives remained the same throughout both phases, there were different objectives in each which characterized their activities and problems peculiar to each.

One year after its establishment, the Ministry of National Culture organized the National Dance Troupe. It was not until 1974, however, that the National Drama Troupe (NDT) came into existence, six years after the establishment of the National Acrobatic Team. Unlike the acrobatics team whose members were formally trained in China, the Dance and Drama members were recruited from those who had 'natural talents' and in the case of dance, were somewhat skilled in traditional performances. The young men and women recruited in the National Drama Troupe came from all over the country. Many had finished their primary school and a few held Form IV leaving certificates. They were all supposed to have passed besides English and Kiswahili, Political Education as well. The age limit was put as under 23. Initially, the National Drama Troupe was supposed to take 25 members divided between two intakes but the actual number came down to 21 (5 women and 16 men); 8 taken in 1974 and 13 the following year.

There were three reasons behind the National Drama Troupe's establishment. The troupe would be the national representative of theatre expression within and outside the country. It would act as a catalyst with its activities spurring others to do the same. Not only that, but the skills displayed in the National Drama Troupe's activities would provide a yardstick for theatre excellence from which others could measure their own and learn.⁷⁰ The Ministry saw this happening not only in Dar-es-Salaam where the troupe was based but also in the regions and the districts. To facilitate development towards these aims, the Ministry introduced in May 1975 formal training by

establishing the College of Theatre Arts. Besides providing facilities and training in the performance arts, the college was entrusted to conduct research and provide consultancy services to 'groups and individuals concerned with artistic activities'. Moreover, the college was charged with the responsibility of running the activities of the National Troupes which would continue to train and perform separately. But by 1978, the College and the National Drama Troupe were facing a number of problems. In a secret report to all the cultural officers the then Minister of National Culture and Youth expressed his dissatisfaction and disappointment at the conditions prevailing at the College. He spoke of bad morale and poor facilities he saw during a visit there. He went on to say:

One would expect that the needs of those working in culture, those who are the custodians of the national spirit, would be among those better taken care of especially within the context of Tanzania. The training environment is neither attractive nor is it as clean as it deserves. The facilities and tools are disappointing. Worse still is the feeling of the artists who believe that things are getting worse for them.⁷¹

One wonders why the Minister was complaining since his Ministry was responsible for the College. The Minister diverted the blame for the conditions at the College and the Drama Troupe to a vague anonymous agent supposedly responsible for the problems. 'No one can be blamed for this state of affairs', he concluded. His report, however, was enthusiastic about the idea of having a centre for culture, like the College, which would not only bring together Tanzanian artists but also bring international recognition to the country for having such a centre. Other countries will be able to send their young people for training

and get certificates 'which for many mean a lot because of Tanzania's international standing'.⁷² Such political enthusiasm for the existence of the College has not overshadowed the problems which have been present since its inauguration. There seems to have been no proper planning nor realistic choices in the physical and professional aspects of the college and the troupe. The premises chosen for the college activities were from the start inadequate and unsuitable. Once in operation there were no attempts at adjustments nor expansion. No development plans for the college were carried out between 1975 and 1980, for example.

Some of the College's and the National Drama Troupe's problems arose from working under a constraining bureaucratic machinery. In spite of the fact that the College had a Principal invested with the power to run it, most decisions had to be made at the Ministerial level. Thus, bottlenecks and delays were common creating frustrations and despair in both tutors and National Drama Troupe members. The welfare of the trainees was another matter of concern. Not only were allowances low but there were no proper schemes of service for the performers. Morale was also affected by discrepancies in salaries. Dance tutors, for example, received less salary than students who became members of the dance troupe. For those who were not absorbed in the national troupes, posting for careers became problematic and they were forced to hang around the college for a long time doing little. Besides these, the training programme itself generated extra problems. First of all, the various performance disciplines were

taught separately so that those in drama, for example, were expected only to 'act' and not dance or perform music. This was a peculiar approach in a country which did not only have complex traditional performances but had promised to try and reclaim them. The guidelines of the curriculum itself was also undirected so that each tutor was left to pretty much decide what training to give.

For those specializing in acting, the prospectus prior to 1980 outlined their courses thus:

- History, theory and forms of drama
- Acting
- Play production
- Technical theatre and theatre production
- Playwrighting
- Criticism
- Music in drama.⁷³

This outline was the only guide for both teachers and students and each was to provide the details and the information according to their own understanding. The quick turnover of tutors did not help matters either. Often, there were long periods when there were no drama tutors. The Ministry tried to fill in the gaps by inviting short term foreign tutors who helped a little but did not completely solve the problems. The members of the National Drama Troupe were also all too young and inexperienced to learn from each other. As if these problems were not enough, the Ministry also carried out discriminatory practices which favoured certain activities at the expense of others. Because

of the Ministry's support for 'airport culture'⁷⁴, for example, the dance troupe received more material and moral support than the National Drama Troupe. By 1980, it was clear that the College was not functioning effectively and the activities of the National troupes were floundering. Except for the several productions it was able to execute, the National Drama Troupe had done no research, no publications and the skills acquired during its training were doubtful. Very few of the National Drama Troupe members had been sent to the rural areas as envisioned in 1974. In 1981, the Ministry disbanded all the national troupes and effected a reorganization of the College of Arts not only in its physical set up but its curriculum as well.

While eliminating some previous objectives the Ministry did not create new ones but instead put a stronger emphasis on those it retained. It still wanted to send trained cultural manpower to the regions by strengthening the training programme which was moved from Dar-es-Salaam to Bagamoyo. The move was rationalized thus:

In time, it proved that the nation's objective of setting up theatre troupes and raising the standard and volume of theatrical activities in the regions and districts would take a very long time to achieve. Part of the problem was the unsure way of supplying appropriate manpower to them and the low leadership and teaching capabilities of the performers posted there from the National Troupes. It then became necessary to draw up a different programme specifically for promotional work.⁷⁵

This comes close to Mbughuni's idea of developing amateurs who will become promoters, administrators as well as leaders in theatre practice. Since its inauguration in 1981, the major change in the College of Arts now in Bagamoyo has been in its integrated curriculum. No longer are

opportunities for specialization offered but the three year programme has been designed to provide the trainees skills in ten major areas - music, stage technology, dance, acting and directing, acrobatics, fine art, writing and theatre criticism, art promotion, the theories of the arts and their histories. Together with political education, the ten major disciplines are taught in sequences which run from the first to the third year. The prospectus gives detailed accounts of the materials to be taught and learned during each sequence of each discipline. In acting, trainees are meant to learn such items as fundamentals of acting, characterization, body action and voice. As in the other disciplines, these items are broken further into smaller details of concentration. The development of the theatre skills is carried out alongside the training in political education. Such subjects as the politics of African underdevelopment, Socialist development in Tanzania, the role of the masses in revolution and the Party, have been devised to equip the trainees with the social and political framework for their present and future work.⁷⁶

One major input in the training programme since 1983 has been the incorporation in the training staff of local traditional performers and artisans as tutors. This was a move long overdue since the guardians of the skills of traditional performances and art have not been the College and University graduates but the traditional performers whose skills more training institutions in the country should have employed.

The changes in the national institution responsible for training

cultural activists seem to have produced tangible and intangible results. When both staff and trainees were interviewed in mid 1984, they expressed confidence in the new programme since it was better organized and had some definite training objectives. In spite of the high morale generated by the reorganization of the training curriculum, there were many complaints which the staff and the trainees put forward. Most of the problems which were pointed out were not new. There were continuing problems of lack of space, equipment, schemes of service, manpower development plans as well as the presence of bureaucratic bottlenecks and official apathy. The fact that the College had no national legal status as an institution worried everyone since it meant that upon completing their course, the graduates' qualifications were recognized by only the Ministry responsible for Culture. This became a problem for those who opted to work outside the Ministry and its institutions.⁷⁷ All these problems were put forward at a meeting with the Minister of Information and Culture in March 1984, but by the end of the year no steps had been taken to alleviate any of the problems.⁷⁸

In spite of the problems, however, between 1975 and 1984 the National Drama Troupe and the Bagamoyo College of Arts managed to produce 23 plays besides dance and musical compositions. These plays share with many plays produced elsewhere a preoccupation with immediate reality. Where the themes are political, there is a predominance of official ideological attitudes and values. But the plays produced by the National Drama Troupe between 1975 and 1980 differ from those produced later in Bagamoyo in two respects: more plays came out of

improvisations in the latter period than earlier and there was less reliance on straight drama as well in the Bagamoyo performances. Amongst the 13 plays produced by the National Drama Troupe (1975-81) were plays like Exodus, Afande, Mwenyekiti (The Chairman), Jiwe la Kwanza (The First Stone), Buriani (Farewell) and Harusi (The Wedding). All these grew out of improvisations or were written by members. There were also productions from established plays such as Hussein's Kinjeketile, Obatunde Ijimere's Everyman, E. Semzaba's Tendehogo. The National Drama Troupe collaborated with other groups to produce Harakati za Ukombozi (The Struggles for Liberation) and just before it was disbanded Tunda and The Challenge and the Gap.⁷⁹

The nature of propaganda for official attitudes varied from play to play in the National Drama Troupe's repertoire. In 1979, it produced Kichuguu Cha Moto which was meant to support Tanzania's fight against Idi Amin of Uganda. During and after the war, there were many such performances done by such other groups as National Service Ruvu and Mgulani, TPDF groups at Lugalo and various other cultural groups. Songs, dances, Ngonjera and plays became quite active in giving support not only to the morale of the troupes but to incite nationalistic feelings amongst the populace. Like the other performances about the conflict with Amin, Kichuguu cha Moto was quite partisan and painted Idi Amin as a fascist, hooligan and power hungry. It tried to justify Tanzania's attitude in not only wanting to kick Amin out of the Tanzanian territory he had invaded but in toppling him from power inside Uganda. Amin is shown to have deserved what he got and the

play was also a form of congratulations for the Tanzanian Defence Forces for their heroism and determination. The play suited well the members of the troupe and the type of training they had received. It was straight conventional drama with the conflict posited between the good of the Tanzanian side and the bad of Idi Amin and his clique. Characterization then was endowed with exaggerations which kept the two sides at the opposite poles of morality but with much favour for the good side. In this, the play shared a common characteristic with *Vichekesho* as well as the other plays produced by the National Drama Troupe. There were times when NDT tried to express criticisms on government practices but these were usually mild. Buriani (Farewell) was such a play. The central idea was the Tanzanian educational system, especially the new educational system which was structured to be in line with Ujamaa ideology and objectives. While commending the new educational system as more relevant to Tanzania's reality, the play exposed problems within it resulting from misinterpretation of policies and bad planning. The aim was not criticism, however, but support for the government's decision to revamp the old system of education and say farewell to it.

Until 1980, however, the National Drama Troupe's plays like Buriani, Kichuguu cha Moto, Afande, etc., did not make much impression on the Tanzanian theatrical scene. The company tried to produce such written plays as Hussein's Kinjeketile in 1977, but it was with two improvisational plays of the early eighties that NDT made its impact. The two plays opened up new alternatives of performance techniques

which were later continued in Bagamoyo. Each contained within itself specific elements which made it a landmark in NDT history and its development. While it was the experimentation with traditional performance skills in the case of Tunda, it was the political and aesthetic elements in The Challenge and the Gap which aroused interest.

Tunda was directed by Martha Vestin of Sweden's Friteatern with the collaboration of a member of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The presence of two performance traditions within the directing team made it possible for the exploration of African traditional performances, on one hand, and a modern European aesthetic on the other. What the team shared was a perspective of theatre which was both performer centred and a non-naturalistic approach to performance. These were to play a major part in the content and form of the play. Tunda was improvised using two traditional folk-tales. Though a new approach to the National Drama Troupe, a similar approach had been experimented with at such places as the University of Dar-es-Salaam since the early seventies. But Tunda became a major production which was seen not only in Tanzania but toured Europe as well and thus received more publicity and exposure.

Even though merged from two stories, the plot of Tunda was not complex. It expressed the existence of oppression and disharmony amongst communities and the need to end them by achieving communal harmony. This was expressed through the relationship between two villages which start out as enemies and the play shows how the animosity is ended with the help of the magic fruit. In one of the villages,

the chief has ten wives but is childless. After eating a magical fruit from the forest, however, his youngest wife bears him a son whom they call Tunda. The other wives are so jealous that they eventually convince the chief to banish Tunda and his mother to the forest. Meanwhile, in the second village, a Mganga terrorizes the inhabitants through intimidation and deception. He has more power than the chief and sustains the fuel of animosity between his and the other village. In spite of the warning of the Mganga, a young man, Kashweku goes to the forest to seek a magic fruit to cure his sick sister. There he meets Tunda, now a young man. The two become friends and together decide to end the enmity between their villages. The Mganga is toppled and the two villages end by celebrating their newly found unity and liberation.

Although it used traditional tales, Tunda spoke of contemporary reality and pointed to disunity and disharmony as detrimental to social development. It was not so much the causes of disharmony in the first instance that the play concerned itself with, but the removal of oppression and divisive elements was the focus. In this, it portrayed individuals as culprits of social divisiveness rather than the conditions of their existence - an attitude which has been quite common in plays after the Arusha Declaration. Besides this, Tunda shared with other plays especially after 1976, two other characteristics: theatre as spectacle and the use of fantasy to speak of reality.

The traditional tales were performed utilizing dance, music, recitations, mime and tableaux of specific images and symbols which

evoked real or fantastical events. The throughline for these events was provided by two narrators who also acted as a link between the other performers and the audience. Rather than complicating issues, all these elements were used in such a way that the conflicts and their resolutions became simplified and idealized. They were structured to demarcate features of social evil from those of social good while bypassing the shaded areas and contradictions which inform the existence of these features. The fantasy parts of the play provided the necessary exaggerations and made the two contending forces not only bigger but also established the inevitable triumph of one and defeat for the other. In the end the national aspirations for unity and eradication of oppressions were upheld.

One of the most ambitious projects undertaken by the National Drama Troupe was the creation of The Challenge and the Gap. After touring Tunda in Europe, NDT was invited to work and train with Sweden's Friteatern. The Challenge and the Gap was the result of both the training and collaboration between the two groups. Like Tunda, The Challenge and the Gap toured Europe before it was shown in Tanzania and later Zimbabwe. The training which NDT received from Friteatern had an obvious advantage. Having been trained through primarily Western realistic methods of performance, the National Drama Troupe was able to learn from Friteatern performance skills which called for creative use of the body and a more visual method of presentation. So, Martha Vestin could justifiably boast that 'the aim of Friteatern has been to provide our comrades (NDT) with more effective tools in form of skills, ideas

and experiences, to be able to build whatever kind of theatre they want afterwards'.⁸⁰ The training did play a major part not only in the production of The Challenge and the Gap, but influenced the work of those who later became tutors at the College of Arts. The Challenge and the Gap, however, was as problematic as it was challenging.

The play was structured around loosely connected scenes which were grouped in two parts. The first group of scenes contained the challenge part in which the cultures of the third world (Tanzania) and the first world (Sweden) were shown to challenge each other. The message was that each culture contains what is specific and peculiar to itself but the two have some common characteristics. For example, a point was made that while ballet shoes were a European cultural element which enabled dancers to stand on toes, the African had stilts. The challenge, however, was shown not only through contrasts but also through antagonisms and prejudices in which the two participating groups accused each other of being the cause of evils in the world. The cultural confrontation was introduced in a form of a boxing match which continued through a presentation of music and dance from each culture. The second group of scenes tried to expose the gap which exists not only between cultures but between the poor and the rich as well as the origins and sustenance of exploitation in each. The idea was to underline the fact that the workers in each country had a common enemy - imperialistic exploitation. The expected conclusion was that the existing gap needed to be eliminated or at least narrowed because of shared fate.



Figure 25: The Challenge and The Gap, NDT and Friteatern, DSM, 1981.



Figure 26: Tunda, NDT, Sweden, 1980.

The project was no doubt innovative, finding common grounds in Tanzania's socialist aspirations and Sweden's commitment to support those aspirations. But The Challenge and the Gap highlighted some political and aesthetic problems of such cooperative ventures. The initial approach to use the two participating groups as representative of cultures on an equal footing was a problem. Performance skills were uneven favouring the Swedish side rather than the Tanzanian. It was also very clear that 'the experience of Friteatern was based on a European Cultural heritage'. The National Drama Troupe, however, had not been firmly trained so that they could base their contribution on a corresponding African Cultural heritage. This meant that the NDT had limited resources to draw upon and what was accessible to them was hampered by lack of performance skills especially in music and dance. There were three more problems just as crucial to the performance as well. It proved difficult to choose issues which could speak to two different audiences.⁸¹ The clarity and unity of the play was also affected by the two conceptual frameworks which informed it. Although the problem haunted the play from its early stages, it seemed to have never been resolved. As Martha Vestin has pointed out:

The Swedish group wanted to create scenes on a very personal level ... The Tanzanian group was more interested in pointing straight at the global situation, at the exploitation of their country in the past and present.⁸²

The play tried to use both approaches as a compromise.

A difference in ideological and political commitment was another problem which affected the work. As a Swedish independent theatre group, Friteatern was and is 'more or less in opposition to the

government' which it sees as part of the capitalistic and imperialistic system. While both the Friteatern and NDT incorporated as their function to criticise such a system, the National Drama Troupe saw itself as an organ of the government and its loyalty made it shy away from any criticism of the Tanzanian government. These two attitudes, one inward looking and specific, and the other outward looking and general seemed not to have mixed well. Martha Vestin describes what the participants tried to avoid in their performance:

... an unbalanced proportion of caricatures of prejudiced, mischievous, racist, greedy, singleminded swines on one side, and well balanced, well articulated, politically mature heroes on the other side.⁸³

The performance, unfortunately, did achieve exactly that.

The experience with Friteatern produced some longterm effects on the work of the College of Arts after the dissolution of the National Drama Troupe. The training in Sweden provided the participants not only with a chance to appraise their commitment in theatre but also with performance skills which have come to play a large part in theatre activities from Bagamoyo. The performances in Bagamoyo have benefited from this, and also from a tighter and coherent curriculum which has made it possible to feed in more needed skills from theatre practitioners outside the College. It has been possible to experiment more using the available skills and making greater contribution to the development of Tanzanian theatre. From 1981 to 1984, Bagamoyo College of Arts produced amongst others Chipukizi, Chaquo Langu, Kosa la Nani and Chakatu. Most of these plays were improvised. It has also produced several dance dramas besides

participating in theatre for social development.⁸⁴ Even though the thematic content of these plays has been inspired by topical social and political issues as in previous plays, changes can be seen in the methods of performance and portrayal of the events surrounding the issues. The performers' work in Bagamoyo has been exemplified in their 1983/84 production of Chakatu which toured in several parts of the country.

Like Tunda, Chakatu is a musical dance drama. They both deal with the conflicts between good and evil and the final triumph of good. However, whereas Tunda concentrated on the process of uniting people to eliminate evil in forms of oppression, Chakatu underlines the process in which evil gains power within the social structure and the mechanisms needed to flush it out. Both processes are looked at from particular individuals, namely the leaders concerned. As in Tunda, the personification of evil in Chakatu is invested in a Mganga - a medicine man - who connives to undermine social good. In Chakatu, however, the Mganga is not in conflict with the people directly as it was in the case of Tunda but with traditional authority which he works hard to supplant. The differences in approach to what appears as a similar theme arise from the political intention of Chakatu. The play was devised at a time when the government was implementing the 'economic saboteurs act'. The campaign aimed at eliminating economic saboteurs who, it was believed, were responsible for social corruption, exploitation, greediness and various other hardships faced by society at large. One of the directors claimed that the play was conceived

to show 'how developed nations use different methods to prolong underdevelopment'. If that was the case, then the play failed in its intention. What comes clearly from watching the performance is how power and oppression seeks to install and consolidate itself within a particular social structure. The struggles are internal rather than between these and external forces.

Before an old Mtemi (chief) dies, the Mganga manipulates events so that he can gain political power. He installs one of his followers as the wife of the young Mtemi so that she can acquire the 'secret' of the rulers' power. The Mganga, however, fails in his schemes and his stooge is caught in the act of stealing 'the secret' of the rulers. In the last scene of the play, there is a witches' dance to flush out Mganga and his followers who have used the witches' evil methods. When they are compelled to expose themselves during the dance, the Mganga and his followers are burnt by the people who then celebrate their victory.

The strongest statement which the play tries to put across is that elements which threaten the people's leaders and the status quo must be eliminated for the people's own good. It is a statement which makes an assumption that the established leadership is democratic and has the people's interests at heart. The leadership is moreover the custodian of the people's identity and the source of their existence. The established leadership is therefore idealized and the link between the people and their leaders is taken for granted. This is exemplified in the play by the lack of any attempt to show interaction between the



Figure 27: Nani Alaumiwe, Bagamoyo College of Arts, 1983.

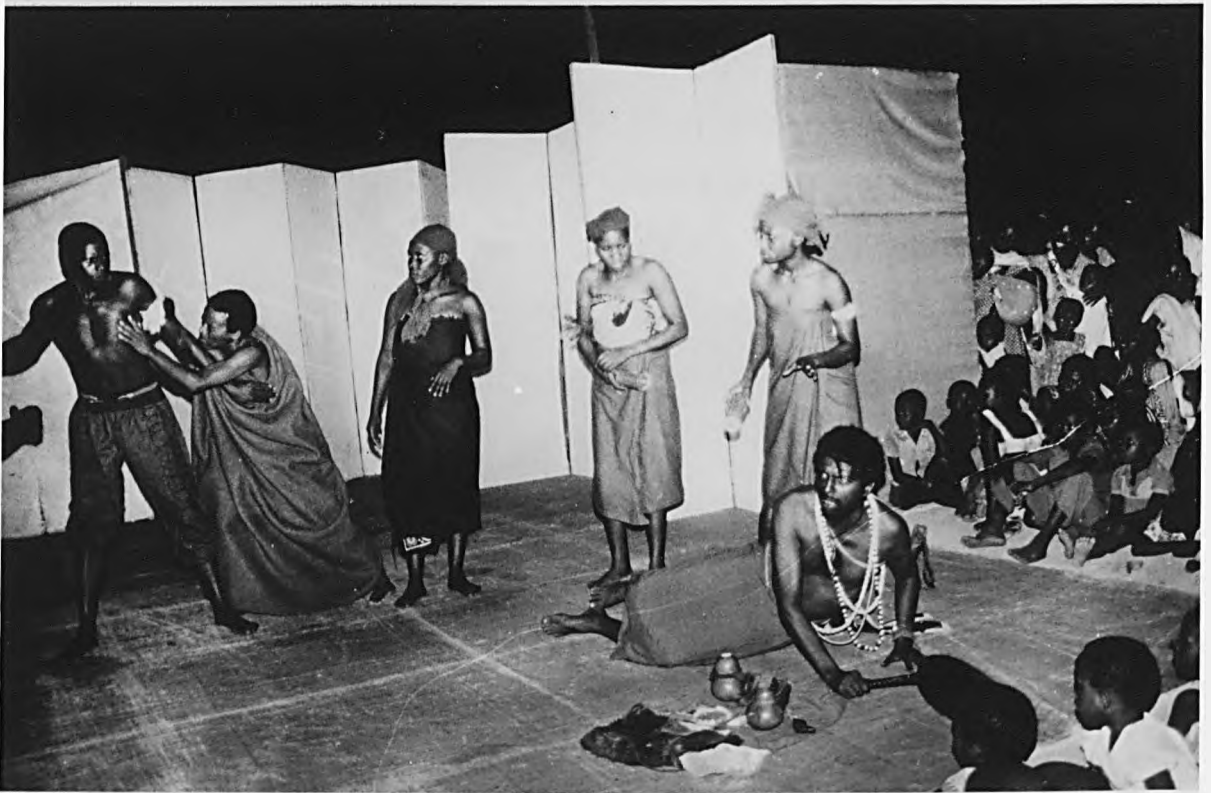


Figure 28: Chakatu, Bagamoyo College of Arts, 1984.

people and their leaders or to justify the process which gives the people power to flush out oppression in their midst. When the performers invite the audience at the end of the play to celebrate the burning of the witches, the gesture is meant to celebrate the triumph of the leadership which is seen as equal to the people's own liberation. It is not an uncommon expression in Tanzania and especially in an institution like Bagamoyo which sees itself as an exponent of the state and its viewpoints.

Besides its obvious political intentions, the greatest contribution of Chakatu to the contemporary theatre scene has been in its visual impact and theatricality. Movement, dance, songs, mime and lighting effects were used in performance to create audio-visual impacts at each stage of the play's development. The performers' acquired skills in acrobatics and stagecraft were used to advantage and brought together elements from the traditional and contemporary theatrical idioms. The play gave a chance to the performers to display the skills acquired in the integrated curriculum vigorously pursued in the previous three years. While the curriculum seems to have worked well in training those involved as performers, it will take time to see how well it has prepared the trainees to be animateurs and cultural officers in the regions. The first graduates of the new programme left the College in June of 1984 and only time will tell whether through them the Ministry will be able to achieve its cultural objectives. The training for future animateurs; however, might also be affected by the planned Institute of Culture in Malya, Mwanza Region. The Institute

was scheduled to open in 1980 with the initial plan of moving the College of Arts from Bagamoyo to Malya. By the end of 1984, however, the Institute had not come into existence and the Ministry had by then changed its plans. Instead of having one College of Arts, both Malya and Bagamoyo will function simultaneously in the future to accelerate the training of animateurs.⁸⁵

4. Radio Theatre

Even before the inauguration and consolidation of the National Drama Troupe and the College of Arts, theatrical support for official ideological and political activities was invested in another government organ - Radio Tanzania Dar-es-Salaam (RTD). Both the history and activities of Radio Tanzania since 1967 bear witness to its propagandistic function not only through forms of conscientization but also as legitimizer of official activities. The radio, unlike the officially sponsored stage performances has the major advantage of reaching a larger audience at any one airing. A survey conducted in 1974 showed that at least four million people listened to the radio at that time.⁸⁶ Because of several factors that number can be expected to have risen by 1984. Accessibility to radio has been facilitated by an increased ability to purchase radio; the presence of a radio assembling plant in the country and the government's allocation of free radio to target groups during particular campaigns, e.g. health, education, etc.

Within the economic and socio-political policies of the Party and government, RTD has been invested with the objectives of educating,

informing and 'entertaining' the nation. It accomplishes these through specific and general programmes broadcast through its three services both in Kiswahili and the External service geared towards outside audiences done in English. In all three, but especially in the Kiswahili services, radio theatre is a major component of the programmes.⁸⁷ Although broadcasting in Tanzania started in 1951 extant radio plays date back to 1954. Between 1954 and independence, plays dealt with such general issues as love, jealousy, family relationships and the dangers of such emotions as anger. This is the period which produced Ndui (Plague) in 1954, Hadithina Mauaji (The Tale of Murders) 1958, Vuta Nikuvute (Pull, I will Pull You) 1960, Mapenzi ni Hasara (Love has no Benefits) 1961 and many others.⁸⁸ The plays were usually half an hour long aired in one period. These plays did not deal with any specific issues immediate to the then Tanganyikan society. Nor did the radio plays reflect the political climate of the time. Between 1954 and 1961 political nationalist fever was on the ascendancy and since the radio was an organ of the colonial state, it obviously permitted no reflection of the political reality in the drama. The mood starts to change for radio plays a few months before independence, a mood which will progressively dominate radio plays until the advent of Arusha. Between 1961 and 1966, radio plays concentrated on the conflicts of alienation. These usually took two forms, but both were informed by the cultural and economic disruption brought about by colonialism. In one form, the historical conflicts of the European colonizer and the African colonized was the major theme.

This dramatized the traumas of colonial exploitation, oppression and the conflicts within the native populations as a result of these. In the second form, cultural conflicts between old traditional values and new adopted ones became the focus. In both these forms reclamation of the past became not only a moral solution but an economic one as well. This feature prepared well the ground for the post Arusha radio plays which continued to propagate the redeeming value of both the land and traditions. Plays heard before the Arusha Declaration included Asiyesikia la Mkuu Huvunjika Guu (He who does not listen to an Elder breaks a leg), Chozi la Mama (A Mother's Tear), Zabibu na Wazazi Wake (Zabibu and his Parents), Mjomba Rashidi (Uncle Rashidi) and Peter wa Mjikila (Peter of Everytown). These plays are much longer than their predecessors and required several installments for their broadcasting. Mjomba Rashidi, for example, was five hours long aired in ten installments.

Beginning early in 1967, radio plays turned to the contents of the Arusha Declaration as the major source of their inspiration. The political and economic dimensions of social practice become paramount. Plays which deal mainly with individual relationships like love, family squabbles etc. decrease. Where they appear, they are always harnessed to the larger economic and political considerations taken primarily from official guidelines. Ujamaa living is made the yardstick to measure economic production and development. Social behaviour, political attitudes and economic activities that work against the building of Ujamaa are vigorously condemned. Problems of leadership,

poverty, education, work ethics, exploitation and oppression are all portrayed with the view of underlining the stipulations of the Arusha Declaration and its subsequent decrees. As Khalid Ponera pointed out, 'they are based on the concrete political and economic situation'. This means that the content of radio plays has continually updated itself to be in line with current political issues or attitudes as the Arusha Declaration was being implemented or as new policies and government activities have cropped up. Radio theatre in Tanzania, therefore, displays the best characteristics of integrationist propaganda within a socialist transformation. Some plays have been chosen as representative of the propagandistic nature of radio theatre between 1967 and 1984.

In Makazi Mapya (New Settlements) 1967, the theme is Ujamaa living. The government has given a call for peasants to move from traditional villages to live together in new Ujamaa villages. The play shows most peasants responding positively but a few resist. One of these few is Mzee Shamte who argues that he cannot leave because he is guardian of his ancestors' graves. Besides, he is used to his old ways. In spite of great efforts exerted by both his family and leaders, Shamte emphatically refuses to move. Left alone, Shamte pays a visit to one of the new villages one day and is pleasantly surprised at the economic developments there. He changes his mind and moves to the new settlement.

The play uses three main factors common in such propaganda to support the government's initiative of Ujamaa living, factors which in a way negate the actual reality it tries to reflect. First of all,

the play goes to a great length to establish how democratic the campaign to move to the villages has been. The possibility of coercion and force on the part of the officials to facilitate the move to new settlements is sidestepped. The intention here is not to portray the complexity of experiences in which the campaign was known to use force and illtreat peasants. The intention is to present an ideal situation without problems and contradictions which is attractive enough to interest people and make them respond positively. The second factor is the minimizing of peasant resistance to move by endowing their motives with a frivolousness. The peasant's reasons for his stubbornness are made to appear as due to ignorance and silly conservatism. Mzee Shamte, for example, is shown to cling not only to his ancestors' graveyard but also to his miserable 'shamba' with two coconut palms and six cashewnuts. Again, here, the fact that most often peasants had very good reasons in refusing to move is circumvented. In some areas, peasants were justifiably reluctant to leave thriving plantations of such crops as cashewnuts, fruit orchards and fertile areas for cultivation. The third factor which is idealized in such plays as Makazi Mapya is the harmony and economic development shown to exist in Ujamaa living. Problems of organization, leadership and inhibitors to development are left out in order to underline the advantages of the new settlements. These characteristics can be found in such other radio plays as Kijiji cha Urithi (Traditional Village) 1972 and Wengi Wape (Give to the Majority) 1978, Njama za Walanguzi (The Plots of Racketeers) 1983-84, and numerous Ngonjera of the period.

In all of them, the characters' problems are shown to arise from the conflicts between individualism, socially undesirable values and capitalistic elements on one hand, and communal interests, Ujamaa ethics and values on the other. The conflicts are always resolved in favour of the values in line with official ideological and political aspirations.

Besides the weekly half hour radio play, RTD has aired other performance programmes which have been serials of isolated episodes linked together by the same characters used in each episode but the issues have differed each time. These also have displayed a pre-occupation with topical issues with a strong bias for official ideology and activities. In 1967, a programme entitled Porojo was inaugurated. This was a weekly ½-hour monologue on current issues. It acted as a commentary on social and political ideas and activities prevalent at the time. Porojo was replaced in 1974 by Mahoka which was still on the air by the end of 1984.

Unlike Porojo, Mahoka is a programme of short plays on everyday events. Though somewhat different, Mahoka shares some characteristics with one of the most popular radio play programmes, Pwagu na Pwaguzi. Both are comedic in approach and each episode is a complete play which is not necessarily connected to other episodes. Moreover, both display an indirect approach to their commitment to official ideology while seemingly letting their entertainment elements prevail. This deception has probably made it possible for the programmes to be accepted, especially by those who frown at obvious ideological manipulation.

Pwagu na Pwaguzi is primarily a two character comedy act ~~as~~ in the tradition of Laurel and Hardy comedies (not that they rose from these, however). They are small time con men attempting various get rich schemes but always with disastrous results. Some of their ventures have included: bread making, burial services, cat raising, carpentry, taxi service, traditional medicine, tailoring, hotel management, telephone repair and a long list of other projects. The characters always start out with grand schemes but unfortunately they are bunglers. At the beginning of each episode a project idea is initiated usually by Pwaguzi. The project is then set up and the problems begin. In the burial service project, for example, Pwagu and Pwaguzi decide to set up a service to help bereaved relatives to bury their dead. In their enthusiasm to make the business grow fast, Pwagu and Pwaguzi wait at a hospital entrance accosting and soliciting for customers. Unfortunately for them, expressions on people's faces prove to be misleading in so far as death having occurred or not. Their tactlessness earns them beatings and characteristically the business fails. It is the failure of these characters to make any of their schemes work that makes Pwagu na Pwaguzi fit in with the post Arusha political and economic ethics. Meaningful production has been emphasized as that which enables a man to live by the sweat of his labour. Pwagu and Pwaguzi try to circumvent this. They dream of getting rich fast by little effort and the swindling of others. They possess neither the skills nor the organizational capacity to make any venture work. These types of actions must fail because they are both exploitative and

unproductive in an Ujamaa sense. This argument is made the stronger by the fact that it contradicts what has been happening in real life. Con artists and petty exploiters have become quite successful in their ventures of shady deals, corruption and racketeering. In the radio plays, these are made to fail miserably because in an ideal socialist situation they would do so. In Mahoka, the statement is made through the moral intended and ridicule directed towards behaviour detrimental to social harmony. The culprits who indulge in such anti-social behaviour as lying, robbing, fraud, laziness, drinking, etc. are always unmasked and made to pay for their behaviour by the long arm of the law. These social evils are not only unmasked but ridiculed by Mahoka's signature which is an absurd laughter before and after the play. The activities are then shown as incapable of being fruitful as well as being ridiculous.

Radio plays originate from two sources: improvisations and written scripts. For the improvisational plays, RTD workers in charge of the drama programmes outline the subject matter to be dealt with and then invite actors to improvise the scenarios. There is a core of actors which RTD uses in such programmes as Mahoka, Pwagu na Pwaguzi and the serial dramas. According to the current director of drama, these possess four essential qualifications needed for the improvisations: lack of shyness, entertainment abilities (meaning comedic), imitation of local accents and wisdom (meaning ability to express experience).⁸⁹ In certain cases, audience appeal has depended not so much on the subject matter as on the presence of particular performers on the

programme. An example has been cited where the absence of one Ibrahim Raha from radio plays caused letters of complaints to flood into RTD offices. RTD's dependence on these actors, however, has not been without problems. These have affected the quality and frequency of radio plays as well as the commitment of performers in general to the production of these plays.

Like most other theatre activities in the country, participation in radio performance is a part-time occupation. Scheduling for recordings to accommodate everyone's convenience becomes a problem. During 1983/84, for example, there were fewer new radio plays. Participants were too pre-occupied with the business of survival to commit enough time to the production of plays. This was aggravated by the fact that financial remuneration in radio performance was dismally low and has not, in spite of the changes in the economy, been upgraded since 1980. Not only is the pay unattractive, but such problems as transport which performers are supposed to provide for themselves have not encouraged participation. Most importantly, these problems have discouraged talents which RTD needs desperately to endow the plays with better quality. This is most apparent in the long serialized dramas like Njama za Walunguzi, Ponda wa Kampuni ya Dagua or Makazi Mapya. There are usually not enough skilled performers to meet the demands of these long serials with many characters. This contrasts with such programmes as Pwagu na Pwaguzi, for example, where the two principal characters have been performed by the most skilled radio performers available and this has resulted in well knit and creative episodes.⁹⁰

Original specific works written for the radio have been scarce. In the early seventies, the University of Dar-es-Salaam conducted a special writing course for the radio and some of the plays were produced but the course was discontinued after 1974. Most written plays have come from adaptations of published stage plays such as Hussein's Kinjeketile, Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and The Merchant of Venice (both based on translations by President J.K. Nyerere); pBitek's Song of Lawino and Robert's Kusadikika.⁹¹ The choice for these plays can be found in their general treatment of class issues, oppression, power and liberation struggles - ideas and issues which have been in tune with Tanzania's political and social pre-occupations.

Most original written radio theatre has come in the form of Ngonjera. These have been similar to the stage Ngonjera discussed in Chapter 4 in both content and form. Ngonjera performed for the stage usually have found their way into the radio or vice versa. Because of the nature of the form, little adaptation has been necessary to move Ngonjera from the stage to radio or the other way round. The commonest change has been to substitute visual links for musical interludes between the various scenes in a Ngonjera to meet the demands of the radio. But unlike stage Ngonjera whose performance has been the total responsibility of the performers, the suitability of Ngonjera for the radio lies in the hands of the radio executives who must approve its content and ideological perspective.

5. Theatre and Education

a. Educational objectives and the role of theatre

The relationship between theatre and education has a component which can be divided into two parts. First of all, theatre in education can be looked at as a process and secondly as performance done for and/or by those in the learning process. Education concerns itself with communication and theatre is one medium through which communication can take place. The communication in education aims at the development of individuals and groups in their ability to acquire thought and action habits most acceptable and functional within their society. It also exposes and develops their capacity to invest, devise and create as well as penetrate deeper meanings of reality. Used well, theatre as a process in education can facilitate some of these in and outside the classroom. It becomes a tool in the journey for self discovery and creative use of the resources available.⁹² Traditional societies were well aware of theatre's potential as a pedagogical institution and utilized it well.⁹³ The second type of theatre in education concerns itself primarily with performance and the skills needed for theatre communication. The aim is to make available opportunities to participate in performance to acquire skills and appreciation for the theatre medium. Ideally, the two modes of theatre in education can compliment each other in a supportive way. Evidence shows, however, that historically, societies have tended to put an emphasis on one or the other and the attainment of a balance has

been a continuous struggle.⁹⁴ In Britain, for example, contemporary efforts have been put into developing theatre in education as a process which is meant to meet the educational as well as aesthetic needs of children and others in the learning process.⁹⁵ Within the Tanzanian educational system, theatre as a process in education has not received much attention. The participation of youth in theatre and its activities has occurred through mainly two channels: theatre as a subject taught in some of the schools, and performances by the youth in plays, Ngonjera, dance and music.

The position of theatre within the Tanzanian educational system has to be understood within the general context of educational objectives as well as from the specific activities of theatre practised within it. Since the attainment of independence in 1961, Tanzania has been struggling to define and direct education towards meeting specific and general needs. During the 1961-66 period, schools were integrated and curriculum was made uniform throughout the Republic. The emphasis was on meeting manpower requirements. The Arusha Declaration tried to re-interpret the objectives of education and make them conform to Tanzania's socialist aims. Adjustments and further emphasis on these objectives were carried through such later policies as the 1968 proclamation for a universal primary education by 1989 (the target was later changed to 1974-76); the 1969 and 1974 Education Acts; the 1969 policy on adult education and the Musoma Resolution of 1974. These policies point to a concern by the national leadership to exploit and direct education for short and long term goals.⁹⁶

The general objectives of education since 1967 have been described as twofold:

- a) to equip learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes for tackling societal problems,
- and b) to prepare the young people for work in Tanzania's predominantly agricultural society.

As such education is supposed to be organized so that individuals develop an enquiring mind, a thirst for knowledge, confidence in their abilities and a socialist perspective to reality.⁹⁷ These broad aims and objectives, however, have not always complemented the need to meet trained manpower requirements in the various sectors which have been selected as priority areas. In practice, manpower requirements have usually taken precedence. This conflict between the broad aims of education and national manpower requirements has affected both curriculum development in the schools and choices of subjects on the part of the students in anticipation of job opportunities.⁹⁸ Theatre, being not a priority area, has been generally relegated to the sidelines of the educational system. Theatre's peripheral position has also meant that it has not been sufficiently exploited as an educational tool for the intended social transformation. Experiments carried out in such places as Chang'ombe, Marangu, Korogwe and schools in Dar-es-Salaam have been too isolated and too few to expose the impact theatre can have on the educational process.

The teaching of theatre as a subject does not show a consistent pattern. By the end of 1984, theatre was being taught at one

secondary school, 15 out of the 35 Colleges of National Education and at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. At the secondary school level, most students are introduced to theatre through Kiswahili where drama written in the language forms part of the required reading material. Only Tabora Secondary School has introduced theatre as an independent course since 1983. Full courses in theatre have been offered at the University and the Colleges of National Education in Dar-es-Salaam and Butimba. The uncoordinated nature of theatre as a subject within the educational system has raised concern amongst teachers, lecturers and theatre practitioners.⁹⁹ The low intake of theatre students at the University, for example, has been attributed to the uncertainty and lack of coordination of theatre arts at the primary and secondary levels. The low numbers of students who opt for theatre at the University has led to suggestions of closing the Department of Theatre - a situation which has created worries and much concern amongst its lecturers.¹⁰⁰

Except in institutions where theatre is given as a full time subject, theatre activities in schools occur as extra-curricular activities. These have increased tremendously since the Arusha Declaration. A survey conducted in 1973 showed that unlike in the pre Arusha period, most primary and secondary schools had groups participating in performances by that year.

This seems to have been sustained so that the schools visited in 1983/84 all had cultural groups engaged in Ngoma, Ngonjera, drama and musical performances. Even here, however, there are many constraints which inhibit the smooth running of theatre activities. These

constraints originate from different areas: pressures from heads of institutions and parents, public opinion, time and financial difficulties. There is pressure put on students to utilize their time more 'fruitfully' on examinable subjects and theatre is most often not. The existence of theatre outside the classroom also depends on the presence of teachers with enough interest to oversee the activities. The secondary schools dramatic societies and Ngoma groups, for example, usually have a staff member known as the Patron. Besides acting as overseer, the Patron may from time to time direct the performances. The level of interest and skill of a Patron can mean success or failure for a group. Many teachers interviewed, however, pointed to lack of time, moral support and commitment to self-reliant projects as obstacles in their acting as patrons. At the Morogoro Secondary School, for example, a very dynamic drama group disintegrated after the only interested teacher left and nobody came forward to replace him. Time allocated to theatre plays a part in determining the frequency and dynamism of a group. Kilakala Secondary School cultural group can use up to two evening hours a day to rehearse their performance. This has enabled the group to perform more frequently at the school and outside. The situation is different where groups are allowed only 1-4 hour weekly meetings for rehearsals as in the case of Bihawana and Morogoro. Their performances are limited to special occasions.

Besides the permanently organized clubs, schools' performances are also done by groups organized for special occasions. Visits by politicians, national celebrations or competitions are some of the

occasions such groups come into being. The most visible venue for performances are competitions at district and regional levels. On the national level both UMISETA¹⁰¹ and UMISAVETA¹⁰² provide institutions with occasions to compete. Outside these, schools have been on occasion selected to represent their areas in the National Cultural Competitions. These venues, however, are too occasional and unsystematic. Interhouse competitions and local celebrations provide the most frequent occasions for performances.

Theatre performances in educational institutions and schools, however, have not differed in a significant way from performances executed by other groups in the country or those written in the period. The plays performed in schools have been as much a part of Tanzanian contemporary drama as any other play in the Republic. Only the organizational context and the system through which the plays and performances have been produced have provided the major difference.

b. Performance and theatre activities in educational institutions

A common attitude which has informed children's performances since 1967 has been expressed by Ruyendo who has said:

In a socialist society, children's theatre must propagate the values most required in the situation. It must strive to kill individualistic attitudes, demoralising master-slave or servant relationships and other feudalistic and bourgeois tendencies. It must infuse in the children a special liking for humanity and an impetus of getting the greatest satisfaction from bettering humanity's lot.¹⁰³

Ruyendo has pointed out that the way to achieve this is not through the use of fantasy in children's theatre but in the use of 'the

concrete reality both of situation and character'. This, he has pointed out, would enable children 'to solve problems in everyday life'.¹⁰⁴ Children's theatre has for the most part taken Ruyendo's advice and the performances have been based on situations taken from concrete reality. Whether this has helped children 'solve problems in everyday life' is a point which demands questioning. What emerges clearly is the children's preoccupation with the same issues and similar approaches of portrayal of these as found in adult performances. This has been exemplified in the thematic content of the plays and Ngonjera performed by children. Such themes as Ujamaa living, exploitation, oppression and liberation have been common and have been the themes of such children's plays as Makupe na Manyonyaji (The Exploiters and Oppressors) 1968, Kijana Usiwe Kupe Jitegemee (Young Man, don't Exploit, be Self Reliant) 1967-68, Ukombozi (Liberation) 1984, and Hali Halisi (The Way Things Are) 1984.¹⁰⁵

One favourite theme, however, has been the problems and factors surrounding education. The situations in the plays usually have concerned themselves with student characters in the process of acquiring education or those who have already gone out into society and are using the education acquired. Common morals for the plays are: education is valuable and ignoring it is retarding one's development; when not properly used education can bring negative effects on individuals and society; and that education is more than what goes on in the classrooms. These are ideas propagated by such plays as Pambo, Dhamana and Mabatini, Martin Kayamba and others already discussed in Chapter 4. The ideas, though simplified, can be found in such school plays as



Figure 29: Children participating in popular theatre, Bayamoyo, 1983.

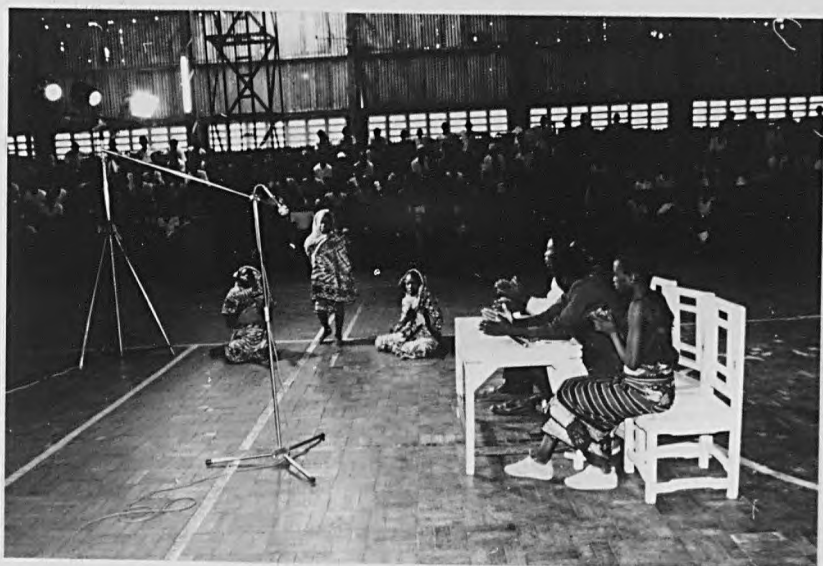


Figure 30: Children performing Ngonjera, DSM, 1984.

Elimu ni Kitu Adili (Education is Essential) 1967, Radhi ya Wazazi (Parental Curse) 1984, Kiongozi Asiyejua Kusoma (The Illiterate Leader) 1968 and 1975, Mbabe 1968, and Ualimu Kazi bora (Teaching is a Worthy Profession) 1968.¹⁰⁶ Teachers who work with children have also occasionally adapted known plays or themes for children. Such plays as Hatia, Tendehogo, Mabatini and Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice¹⁰⁷ have provided themes and situations for children's plays.

How well elements of reality are reflected in children's plays was exemplified in the 1983 and 1984 drama competitions for primary schools in Dar-es-Salaam. There was an overwhelming presence of elements of criminality, for example. In most plays presented, there were elements of criminality shown through the presence of bribers, racketeers, thieves, hooligans and the arm of the law which is supposed to curtail these. The criminal elements are always arrested by either the police or the militia amidst much enjoyed violence. While this reflects the children's exposure to activities observed in their urban environment, it also reflects the permeation of the law within society, especially the people's militia. Consciously, their presence endorses the official strength to bring to justice social and economic offenders but unconsciously the violent acts carried out by the organs of the law are taken for granted. In real life, the people's militia has become not only more visible in the streets but has earned the reputation of being indiscriminately oppressive. This reality is reproduced without question. The children, however, are not worried about the implications of their portrayal. The reality they show is an adult reality

made ridiculous by the light hearted manner of their performance. They are acting out an adult reality which to them is as good as any fantasy and their comedic approach to all elements within that reality makes the plays better theatre for adults rather than fellow children. They unconsciously display the absurdity of adult practices in the simplicity of their lampooning and exaggerations of the situations and the characters. Not only does this apply to children's plays exposing social foibles only but especially those in which political rhetoric is a major component. The naivete of the children parading economic and political slogans brings to focus the naivete of those adults who have opted to be parrots. While adults can hide behind their maturity and the question of their understanding of the issues is veiled, children are open and bring out the contradictions inherent in the practice. While serving well an adult audience, however, theatre for children in Tanzania needs more effort to cater to the needs of children, needs which include fantasy that demystifies and tickles their imagination. On at least two known occasions, children have participated in creating theatre performances which show the possibilities of using demystified fantasy and a tackling of issues within the children's own understanding and experience.¹⁰⁸ In the first case, children under the guidance of some teachers used a traditional tale to create a dramatic performance. The story was a familiar one. A serpent has invaded a harmonious community and taken residence in the only community well. He not only makes it impossible for the villagers to get water but also makes impossible demands in return for the

precious liquid. A unanimous decision is taken to lure the serpent out and eventually destroy him. The most important part of the exercise was the process of creating the performance. The children did discuss the issues and the implications of each step in which decisions had to be made. They enjoyed creating the serpent, the well, and explored the skills and experience of a traditional community. For example, much time was devoted to learning the portrayal of skills in hunting, dancing, arts and crafts, fishing, etc. Decisions were made according to available knowledge, skills and possibilities. The children used much time to decide, for example, how to destroy the serpent. They chose to burn it in the end. The play is obviously about oppression and the needed unity and ingenuity to stop it. In discussions, children were quite able to relate the theme of the play to what they have experienced in real life. They at the same time enjoyed the fantastical elements within the production. It was also possible to expand their understanding of some simple things like the learning of various skills, albeit, imaginatively rather than realistically.

The same group of students prepared several performances during 1983/84, but without the supervision of teachers. In one of them, at least, they showed that they can reflect class contradictions in their own terms and form their own reality. The play was on the effect of class alliance on teachers and pupils. A child whose father had a relatively good job and was thus well off, got preferential treatment from the class teacher. The teacher saw herself as in the same social

class with the child's father and hoped to gain certain favours from him. In spite of his brilliance, another child who came from a poor background was ill treated or ignored by the teacher. The teacher, however, changed her attitude the minute the 'rich father' lost his job and became poor. The children took this from their everyday school experience. In their school, students come from primarily two groups: those whose parents are peasants or of low income bracket and those whose parents are academicians or in managerial positions. Class alliances have become quite acute where clothes, accessibility to books and possessions form criteria for peer identification. Cases of favouritism and abuse of power are not uncommon. The children in their own way managed not only to expose the unfairness of the teacher's behaviour but the economic reasons underlying it.

Theatre activities also increased in secondary schools after the Arusha Declaration. This was, as in the case of the primary schools, a direct response of the schools to participate more in cultural activities as directed by official attitudes. This increase was also due to the opening up of more venues for performances especially in the area of competitions. As the activities of the Youth Drama Festival¹⁰⁹ declined, there was a great upsurge of regional festivals all over the country. These opened up greater participation of schools than was in the case of the Youth Drama Festival because of the proximity of the venues for the events. The competitive nature of the regional festivals, however, seemed to have bothered some theatre practitioners who saw the competitions as fostering lack of originality and competi-

tion for competition's sake. The lack of originality in the competition entries of 1972 and 1973 so bothered one of the judges that he included the following in his report:

I feel we must now drop the idea of competitive festivals. I don't accept the fact that students and their teachers will only work in cultural activities if they know they may win a trophy. I am sure that festivals in the true African sense will help to stimulate the desire to experiment with the various art forms in order to create new forms of expression.¹¹⁰

Competitions also evoked a strong reaction from Penina O. Mlama:

Theatre ceases to be a functional art because it forces the participants within the limits of what the adjudicator wants. In fact to them, the adjudicator is the most important figure with whom they want to communicate, not the society.¹¹¹

What both these comments leave out is the type of organization in schools and the competitions which have ensured the type and forms of plays presented. Schools are not willing to devote a lot of time to a periphery activity unless they can get something in return. Trophies provide a motivation to attain recognition. Original works usually take longer to devise than the rehearsals of an existing play. Moreover, one is never sure that points can be scored on 'relevancy' on an original script. A well established script has already institutionalized its thematic relevancy on especially the judges. Thus plays like Hussein's Wakati Ukuta and Muhando's Hatia¹¹² became popular entries at competitions especially in the early seventies. The popularity of these texts, however, was also due to the fact that published texts were quite scarce and schools used what was available.

The lack of experimentation and predominance of Western models of

performance in the schools have also been informed by other factors - familiarity and competition guidelines. Most teachers who have been in charge of school performances have been more familiar with proscenium conventions than any others. Both their experience and the presence of auditoriums especially in older secondary schools have made the usage of the proscenium stage not only familiar but most often obligatory. The guidelines to the competitions have also favoured the conventional dramatic model where such items as continuity and motivation in action and character have rated high. The schools competitions have also put an emphasis on performances which do not require audiences. The presence of the performers and the judges have sometimes been the only requirement. Performances held during working hours or where other participants in the competitions have been barred from attendance have not been uncommon.

By the late seventies and early eighties, school competitions were informed by another important factor which has brought some significant changes. To solve the problems of original texts and encourage creativity, competition organizers provided specific topical themes for the plays. While this produced many original plays, the similarity of themes tended to create lack of variety and conformity. This problem of conformity worried some organizers so much that by 1984, the provision of specific themes for the competitions was abandoned in Dar-es-Salaam. The idea of presenting original works, however, remained and this was evidenced in the 1983/84 entries, one-third of which were original.¹¹³ The presence of trained teachers in

theatre has also contributed to some new directions in the performances. In the entries for the 1984 competitions, for example, a couple of plays under the supervision of Butimba graduates showed a different approach to that familiar in schools. Kuteleza si Kuanguka (To Trip is not to Fall)¹¹⁴ and Udhalimu wa Jenerali Kigongo (The Fascism of General Kigongo)¹¹⁵ were plays which dealt with different situations but used a similar method of portraying their issues. The first play dealt with the issue of exploitation and the second with oppression. While the first used metaphors, the second used a heightened sense of theatricality. In both cases, there was an attempt at arousing the spectators' moral indignation about exploitation and oppression. They both displayed atrocities in such a way that revulsion could be directed towards the elements condemned. They also demanded translations from the theatrical event presented to the reality it was supposed to inform. It was not surprising therefore that both plays had a mixed reception. Teachers who saw Kuteleza si Kuanguka said they did not understand it while Jenerali Kigongo was thought to be too irrelevant to Tanzania's reality. Both did not win in their respective competitions.

The approach taken by the two plays reflects the training and theatre experience the teachers have had at Butimba College of National Education, the only college which has been responsible for training teachers in theatre arts since 1979. Prior to the inauguration of theatre arts courses in Butimba, a diploma course was conducted at the Dar-es-Salaam College of National Education in Chang'ombe from 1972 to

1975. The Chang'ombe course was initiated in the wake of the Arusha Declaration with its nationalistic cultural fervour. The course was to prepare theatre teachers for secondary and college levels, while at the same time providing academic qualifications for those who wanted to pursue their training at a degree level. By the mid-seventies, however, the fervour for cultural development was waning and meeting obstacles. The openings to teach theatre in the secondary schools were neither instituted nor expanded. Between 1975 and 1978, there were no courses for theatre teachers offered except at the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The introduction of the Butimba course enabled not only teachers but others interested in theatre to graduate and afterwards to be posted to parastatal and government ministries. By 1983, 46 graduates had been produced.

The two year theatre course in Butimba has been highly practical while giving the theoretical component just sufficient attention. Between 1979 and 1984, 17 plays were produced, several of which were seen outside Mwanza.¹¹⁶ The techniques and elements used in these plays display the three major aesthetic influences the participants and the course have had in its years of existence. These have been the melodramatic realistic style taught by Korean theatricians, the narrative and mixed forms of traditional performances and conventional drama as well as new European aesthetic approaches taught by visiting Western theatre artists as well as nationals.

The North Korean teachers brought with them a form of melodramatic realism which has characterized many Butimba performances. This

approach calls for the arousal of emotions to create empathy through an exaggerated presentation of situations and characters in particular moods. In any event, it is not the particular elements but the effect of the total mood which is emphasized. To a large extent, this was accomplished in Kuteleza si Kuanguka and Udhalimu wa Jenerali Kigongo. It has been a feature in such Butimba productions as Historia ya Tanzania Wakati wa Ujerumani (The History of Tanzania in the German Era) 1980, Ukame (Drought) 1981, Radhi ya Baba (A Father's Curse) 1981, Masumbuko na Ndelawasi 1982.¹¹⁷ The Korean teachers also laid a foundation for the exploitation of theatre elements undeveloped elsewhere in the country. These were technical skills in costuming, set design, sound, props and lighting. Butimba productions have therefore been characterized by carefully executed and functional stagecraft. Besides the Koreans, Butimba trainees have benefited from the experiences and skills of theatre practitioners from the University of Dar-es-Salaam as well as practitioners from England. While the first brought in skills in the use of narrative elements, dance, music, recitations and mime, the second provided the skills in the use of 'tableaux' and theatre expressions in vogue in contemporary Europe.¹¹⁸ The acquired skills have been demonstrated in such productions as Azenga na Azoto 1981, Tutashinda (We Shall Win) 1983, and Mapambano na Muungano (Struggles and Unity) 1984.

Like most productions in Tanzania, the Butimba theatre productions have taken their themes from areas seen as relevant to national reality. This preoccupation has led the participants to rely more and

more on creating new plays rather than use already produced or published plays. In 1979, for example, two out of the four plays performed were based on published scripts. The 13 plays produced between 1980 and 1984, however, used only two existing scripts and one adaptation. While Butimba remains the most active college in theatre, the other National Colleges of Education have managed to offer some limited training in theatre and produce a production or two a year. As in the secondary schools, the vitality of theatre in the other colleges has depended very much on the teachers present who have been either interested and/or trained in theatre.

Theatre organization differs from College to College. In Korogwe, for example, theatre activities are effected by a loosely organized drama club, while in Mpwapwa, theatre performances are done by those students who take theatre as an option. Both Colleges have trained theatre teachers but Mpwapwa has qualitatively and quantitatively better productions. This can be attributed to the presence of younger and more interested theatre teachers in Mpwapwa, as opposed to Korogwe where the teachers are not only older but have succumbed to apathy.

Of all the educational institutions, the University of Dar-es-Salaam has shown a more intimate relationship to the events after the Arusha Declaration. This can be seen in both the historical organization of theatre as an academic subject and the performances which have resulted from this organization as well as the reality after Arusha. The University of Dar-es-Salaam (UDSM) became a full national University in 1970. Before that it was part of the University of

East Africa known as University College Dar-es-Salaam inaugurated in 1961. Theatre Arts courses were introduced in 1965 in the Department of Literature. There was a strong feeling at the time to establish a full department of theatre for 'the promotion of a national drama by giving an effective professional training to young men and women who would help to develop this art in the country'.¹¹⁹ Expert recommendations outlined the academic and social role of the department:

In so far as the Department or School is to be a constituent part of a University College it must always be able to justify its existence in identical educational terms of reference to its fellow disciplines in humane studies: equally as a Department or School in a country that has no established professional theatre or theatre school, it must offer training facilities that can in time produce men and women who, on leaving the College are competent to bring a professional theatre into existence.¹²⁰

In actual practice, the department would concentrate on the 'espousal of a forward looking literate theatre of an artistic and political commitment'.¹²¹ The outward approach would serve the needs 'of a swiftly changing community seeking prestige both in Africa and overseas'.¹²² The curriculum would then incorporate material from such areas as 'Oriental drama, Greek, Roman and Medieval (including Shakespeare)' and 'modern drama (starting with Shaw and O'Neil)'.¹²³ All these views on the rationale and structure of the department of theatre were adopted and created problems and contradictions which were to plague the department in years to come. The major of these being the conflicts between academic and professional expectations within the University at large and in the departmental curriculum and activities specifically.

Early resistance to the formation of the department came from the other two East African Colleges - Makerere and Nairobi. These questioned the rationale of starting a department in Dar-es-Salaam instead of strengthening the already existing activities in Kampala and Nairobi.¹²⁴ Nationalistic fervour, however, favoured the move and in July 1967, five months after the Arusha Declaration the Department of Theatre Arts came into being. After its establishment, criticism started to emerge from within the University itself. The critics pointed out two major areas of concern: a) the failure of the department to meet its own objectives and b) the misplacement of theatre within an academic institution. G. Ruhumbika wrote in 1970:

By looking at its syllabus and its activities, it is obvious that the Theatre Arts Department does not offer such a professional training, and for all purposes, it would like to pass for just one more academic discipline.¹²⁵

These critics pointed also at the failure of the department in not making use of the 'rich theatrical forms so manifest in our societies - the dances, the music, the art of the African story-teller, etc'.¹²⁶ While the first criticism is justified from the department's failure to balance its academic and professional commitments, the second is not based on any pronounced objective. From the outset, there was an attitude which informed the curriculum and theatre activities which justified the exclusion of traditional theatre performances - 'no easily recognizable dramatic tradition exists in East Africa either in religious observances or in association with music or literature'.¹²⁷ It followed, therefore, that both the curriculum and performances

reflected this attitude. Of the eight productions performed in 1967 and 1969, for example, six were dramatic plays by such writers as Chekhov, Schwartz, Soyinka and Euripides.¹²⁸ There was a strong foreign input in them which corresponded to the 'outward' looking nature of the department.

Instead of a Theatre Arts Department, the establishment of an Institute of Culture was recommended as a more feasible structure for theatre training and practice. This idea was not new as it had surfaced as early as 1967 but neither then nor later would the recommendation produce practical results.¹²⁹ The non-materialization of the Institute can be attributed to the high estimated costs which discouraged government commitment. There seems to have been no positive response from donor countries (e.g. the USSR) either. Meanwhile, the department grew and expanded strengthening earlier weak elements and incorporating new ones. By 1975/76, Fine Art and Music became major components of Department which has come to be known as the Department of Art, Music and Theatre. Traditional performances were given better focus as a result of those early criticisms and this was reflected in the performances, the curriculum and research areas. The developments, however, have not been without drawbacks. The institutionalization of art, music and theatre within the same department has stemmed out of a recognition of the interrelatedness of these arts especially in African cultural practice. The way these have functioned within the department, however, leaves much to be desired. The envisioned common grounds of operation have only existed

in administrative matters. Each sub-department has functioned separately academically and professionally. The problem here goes back to the establishment of these disciplines. Neither the curriculum nor the practical activities were given a cross disciplinary approach which could have meant the arts feeding and enriching from each other. Attempts to offset this disadvantage have met with little success in spite of attempts by staff members to re-organize the curriculum and the activities.¹³⁰

Theatre performances at the University of Dar-es-Salaam since 1967 have shown a concern not only at the political and social reality alone but also at the role of the intellectual in theatre in the process of change. This role changes as reality and the assigned political commitment changes. This is, however, given a constancy in the perceived place of a committed intellectual as a guardian-protector of the masses. As a result, there seems to be no contradiction in performances which heavily support the dominant ruling hegemony and those which act as agent provocateur to this hegemony. They are united in showing the intellectual as god-father of the masses who need to be made aware of the ruling hegemonic values as well as express these as being in opposition to the people's interests. Historical development has usually dictated which one of these informs the particular performance. Because of this, theatre performances at the University have made a significant contribution to Tanzania's theatre scene. In addition, quite a number of national theatre practitioners have worked at the institution. E.N. Hussein, Penina Mlana, E.

Chambulikazi, L.A. Mbughuni, G.Z. Kaduma and Tololwa Marti are some of those who have been active in Theatre at the University and outside it. It comes as no surprise, therefore, when a close look at the performances at the University of Dar-es-Salaam display certain characteristics found outside it. The major characteristic here being the distinction between plays performed between 1967 and 1976 and those which came after. This emerges from both the quantity of plays performed in each period and the style and material chosen.

In the earlier period of 1967-76, theatre was quite active at the University. Forty-one productions were produced by both staff and students. After 1969, many original plays were written and a few of these were published. Plays like Kinjeketile, Wakati Ukuta, Alikiona, Hatia and Kijiji Chetu were written or produced as class projects during this time.¹³¹ Theatre groups like The Studio Theatre, The Experimental Theatre and The Dance Ensemble came into being and were responsible for many performances. These groups drew members from the department and the University community. This enlarged participation. Cultural participation was seen at this time as a matter of pride in nationalistic expression. In performance could be seen such familiar plays as Soyinka's The Strong Breed, Rebecca Njau's The Scar, Fugard's The Island and Sizwe Banzi is Dead, Brecht's The Paris Commune. There were also adaptations of Euripides' Trojan Women, Chekhov's The Bear, Schwarz's The Vulture and translations of Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice and Brecht's The Measures Taken. There were also about eight productions of original plays by students. Except for the dance

creations of G.Z. Kaduma the plays were predominantly conventional drama. Experimentation meant adding a song or dance to the drama but not much integration took place. The presence of a heavily expatriate staff was the main cause for this which was also responsible for more plays favouring English than Kiswahili (three-fifths of all the straight dramas). Besides the plays, Ngonjera was produced and participation in radio theatre was obligatory. Generally, these productions supported Tanzania's socialist aspirations. The plays were used as vehicles of education, conscientization and assimilation of accepted ideological elements not only nationally but internationally. Imperialism, exploitation and oppression were given a both parochial and wider perspectives and justified the adaptations and productions of works outside Tanzania's boundaries.

The first eight years after the Arusha Declaration stand in great contrast to those that followed. Between late 1976 and 1983, there were only 20 productions, almost half the previous total. Besides the departmental productions, only two other groups contributed to performances. One of these had members from outside the University.¹³² The fervour for cultural expression through theatre had waned and few from the University community could be drawn to participate. This is the period which produced Hussein's Mashetani, Soyinka's The Trials of Brother Jero, A. Cesaire's A Season in the Congo, Ruganda's The Burdens and others like Giza Limeingia, Chuano, Mabatini and Sokomoko. The productions which were original show a shift in both style and language. More productions appear in Kiswahili in this period (13 out of 20) and

there is a proportionate emphasis on dance-musical dramas as well as story-telling and recitations. This coincides with a total nationalization of the department's staff who were interested in experimenting with traditional performance elements more seriously. Others have seen this as a more serious commitment to both the critical handling of issues and aesthetic choices which can portray complex reality.¹³³ This period saw also a withdrawal from such performances as Ngonjera and radio plays in which the University contributed heavily in the earlier period. Even though there were pressures from within the department which resulted in this unplanned move, there were aesthetic and political considerations which made Ngonjera and the radio plays no longer attractive outlets for expression - the one-sidedness of propaganda expected within these performances. The plays also display a more inward looking character so that most have a Tanzanian or African based reality. There were no adaptations or productions of plays outside the African continent during this period.

Changes have also occurred in the approach to make University performances and the skills of its practitioners available outside Dar-es-Salaam. In the late sixties and early seventies, the University was quite active in 'taking theatre to the people' and its groups toured productions in the regions. While this has continued in a limited way, after 1976, efforts have been more directed towards the development of theatre for social development. These activities by University groups as well as others are discussed in Chapter 6.



Figure 31: Praising the Sun, UDSM, 1973.



Figure 32: The Island, UDSM, 1975.

Notes to Chapter 5

- 1 Ali Mazrui has described cultural engineering as: 'deliberate manipulation of cultural factors for purposes of deflecting human habit in the direction of new and perhaps constructive endeavours. See Ali A. Mazrui, Cultural Engineering and Nation Building in East Africa, Evanston, 1972, p.xv.
- 2 Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Kenneth Kaunda have variously pointed out the conflict between official commitment and intentions. See Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Homecoming, London, 1972, pp.11-13; Kenneth Kaunda, A Humanist in Africa, London, 1966, p.59.
- 3 He has also lectured in drama at the University of Dar-es-Salaam before and after his sojourn at the Ministry.
- 4 L.A. Mbughuni, The Cultural Policy of the United Republic of Tanzania, UNESCO, Paris, 1974.
- 5 Ibid., p.10.
- 6 Ibid., pp.16 and 17. See also J.K. Nyerere in Tanzania National Assembly, Official Reports, Dar-es-Salaam, 1962, p.9.
- 7 See Mbughuni, op.cit., p.18.
- 8 Ibid., pp.30-52.
- 9 From an interview with L.A. Mbughuni, Morogoro, February 10, 1984.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 P.O. Mlama, 'The Major Tasks and Problems of Cultural Policy and Implementation in Tanzania', a paper presented at the 6th International Course for Cultural Policy and Mass Culture Activities for Cadres from Developing Countries, Soundershausen, GDR, 1981.
- 12 Ibid., p.7.
- 13 J. Anderson, 'Public Policy Making', as quoted in W.I. Jenkins, Policy Analysis: A Political and Organizational Perspective, Martin Robertson, London, 1978, p.15.

- 14 Cabinet paper no.39, Cultural Policy File No.C10, Folio 162, 1965, p.2.
- 15 See R.M. Kawawa, 'The Promotion of Cultural Activities in Tanzania', Cultural Policy File No.C10, Folio 162, 1965. Kawawa was then the Prime Minister and at a Regional Commissioners' Conference said:
The main objective of a National Culture is the Development of Tanzanian nationalism and personality through the promotion of our own cultural activities. (Ibid.)
- 16 This was a consortium of American advisors from McKinsey and Company, Inc.
- 17 See the McKinsey & Company, Inc., 'Defining Elimu's [Education] New Role and Organization', Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam, 1973 (mimeo), pp.1-4.
- 18 McKinsey & Company, Inc., 'Coordinating Development of Culture and Youth', The Ministry of National Culture and Youth, The United Republic of Tanzania, 1975.
- 19 The party also wanted to intensify coordination between the youth and cultural programmes. (Ibid.)
- 20 For the ministerial structure from 1974-83, see Chart 1.
- 21 The Ministry published some of its research findings through such publications as Utamaduni Chombo cha Maendeleo, 1980, Mila na Desturi za Wazigua, 1980, and Jipemoyo, 1980.
- 22 In 1984, the Prime Minister, formerly a journalist, took charge of the mass media, e.g. the radio and newspapers, while art, music and theatre were put under one of the Ministers of State in the Prime Minister's Office. This reorganization followed the death of the previous Prime Minister, Edward Sokoine in April 1984 and President Nyerere reshuffled his Cabinet and amalgamated several ministries to create fewer ministerial structures.
- 23 McKinsey & Company, Inc., 1975, as quoted in Ulla Vuorela, Jipemoyo, Dar-es-Salaam, 1980, p.13.
- 24 I owe this information to the Administrative Officer, Directorate of Arts and National Language, The Prime Minister's Office, Dar-es-Salaam, June 1984.

- 25 From a circular, 'Mwongozo wa Utekelezaji' 1980/81, Theatre Arts, Ministry of Youth and National Culture.
- 26 The relationships of these bodies are shown in Chart 2.
- 27 See Jipemoyo, 1980, p.71.
- 28 From interviews with cultural officers in Mwanza, Dodoma, Morogoro, Tanga, Coast and Dar-es-Salaam regions.
- 29 D.K. Ndagala and E. Matteredu, assistants to the Minister of Information and Culture expressed their concern with the position of cultural officers in the country and thought the Ministry was not taking its responsibilities too seriously. From an interview in Dar-es-Salaam, May 22nd, 1984.
- 30 Interview with Mbughuni, op.cit.
- 31 From interview with C.R. Maliwanga, Head, Theatre Arts, Ministry of Information and Culture, Dar-es-Salaam, January 12th, 1984.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 The development and activities of the school are discussed in Section 3 of this Chapter.
- 34 The bill was passed in October 1984 and the information here is from its draft made available by the Ministry of Information and Culture, Dar-es-Salaam, 1984.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 See the Daily News, March 16, 1984.
- 37 See Mfanyakazi, August 18, 1984.
- 38 From the Party Office responsible for Propaganda and Mass Mobilization, Dar-es-Salaam, June 2, 1984.
- 39 See Bismarck U. Mwansasu, 'The Changing Role of the Tanganyika African National Union', in Mwansasu and Pratt, eds., op.cit., 1979, pp.169-192.
- 40 See Majadiliano ya Mkutano Mkuu, September 1971, and Ripoti ya Semina ya Utamaduni, 1-7 Machi 1970, University of Dar-es-Salaam.

- 41 Azimio la 13 la Mkutano Mkuu wa 15 wa TANU, 1971.
- 42 See 'Tamko la Chama Juu ya Utamaduni wa Taifa', Dodoma, 1976, CCM Headquarters.
- 43 See for example Mustapha Nyanganyi in Uhuru, Nov.20, 1982, Rashid M. Kawawa in Uhuru, Nov.12, 1984, Benjamin Mkapa in Daily News, Jan.1, 1982.
- 44 This play is discussed in Chapter 4. See also Uhuru, Julai 30, 1983. Additional information was provided by Paukwa Theatre Group.
- 45 Janik Boesen discusses this problem in his 'Tanzania: from Ujamaa to villagization' in Mwansasu and Pratt, 1979, pp. 132-133.
- 46 See Maendeleo ya Mikoa, Budget 1984/85, in the Prime Minister's Budget Speech, Dar-es-Salaam, 1984.
- 47 Prime Minister, Budget 1984/85, p.45.
- 48 During the second Five Year Plan, Tsh. 2,000,000 were set aside for the expansion of the National Stadium and 1½ million for a cultural centre. The stadium was built but the centre never materialized and its funds diverted to other activities primarily sports. Also the 1980/81 estimates show Tsh. 16,074,000 were asked for sports and Tsh. 1,525,800 for the arts. While the arts received a state subsidy of Tsh. 20,000, sports received Tsh. 4,325,000 during 1984/85. From Budget speeches for the Ministries responsible for culture in the respective years.
- 49 In Mbughuni and Ruhumbika, op.cit., p.238.
- 50 See a summary of the 20 year cultural plan in Appendix D.
- 51 The feasibility study and blue prints were prepared by Mund Associates (Tanzania) and by 1980, the project was estimated to cost Tsh. 48,000,000. From Ministry files.
- 52 Discussions for this were carried out between 1968 and 1970 and a draft constitution drawn up while financial help was sought from such countries as the USSR. From Committee Reports, Culture Institute, University of Dar-es-Salaam.

- 53 See Daily News, September 1, 1982.
- 54 The speech was broadcast by Radio Tanzania on May 15, 1984. See also Daily News, May 16, 1984.
- 55 The information on the cultural programmes is contained in various circulars within the Ministry and also from interviews and attendance of cultural programme activities between 1982 and 1984.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 For a summary of these plays see Appendix E. See also Figures 21-24.
- 58 See Theatre and Education, Part 2 of this Chapter.
- 59 The political responsibilities of artists were reemphasized by both the General Secretary of the Party and the Minister of National Culture and Youth in 1983. 'Artists must contribute to the revolution', said one and 'artists must expose economic saboteurs' said the other. See Uhuru, May 4 and October 26, 1983.
- 60 From various circulars on the competition and interview with Mbughuni, op.cit. Estimates show that Tsh. 9,999,280 were to be spent in zonal competitions and the rest in the national. Facts on actual expenditure were not available and officials were reluctant to make any revelations.
- 61 Interview with Mbughuni.
- 62 From the Budget Session, The Prime Minister, Dar-es-Salaam, 1984/85.
- 63 From interview with District Cultural Officers in Korogwe, Tanga Region, November 25th, 1983.
- 64 Madanga S. Madanga, 'Maonyesho ya sanaa Yalivyoendeshwa', Uhuru, January 16, 1984.
- 65 Similar complaints were voiced by Cultural Officers in the Western Zone in Dodoma. From interviews and meeting report, Dodoma, March 12th, 1984.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 The temporary suspension resulted also from complaints on competition judges. See Uhuru, January 11, 1984.

- 68 See Daily News, September 1, 1984.
- 69 Mbughuni has conceded that this has been a problem but not a major one. In interview February 10, 1984.
- 70 From various circulars, letters and guidelines on the National Drama Troupe and College made available by the Ministry, Dar-es-Salaam, March-June, 1984.
- 71 This was contained in a confidential letter from the Minister of Youth and National Culture to all Cultural Officers, January 18, 1978. My translation.
- 72 Ibid. In an undated circular of 1978, the Ministry revealed that it was encouraged to establish the College by the Tanzania Conference of Bishops which promised Tsh. 33,000,000 towards the project. The promise was withdrawn later.
- 73 This was contained in a report for the First Board of Directors' meeting of the College, 2-3 September, 1980, Dar-es-Salaam.
- 74 On 'airport culture' see cultural troupes in Chapter 4, note 178.
- 75 Prospectus, Bagamoyo College of Arts, 1982, p.1.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 From a report on a Ministerial delegation to the College by A. Lihamba, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 26 March, 1984.
- 78 The Minister responsible for culture paid a two hour visit to the College on March 24th, 1984, but his delegation spent two days appraising the developments at the College, 24th-25th March, 1984.
- 79 This information is from College files, scripts, and attendance at the performances discussed. Additional information from G. Materego, tutor at College of Arts. See Appendix F for a list of plays by the College and the National Drama Troupe. See also Figures 25-28.
- 80 See Martha Vestin, The Challenge: a report of a two year collaboration between the National Drama Troupe of Tanzania and Friteatern of Sweden, 1982, p.45.
- 81 Ibid., p.28.

- 82 Ibid., p.17.
- 83 Ibid. See Figure 25.
- 84 For Theatre for Social Development, see Chapter 6.
- 85 This was announced by the then Minister of Information and Culture, Bagamoyo, March 24th, 1984.
- 86 From G.L. Mytton, 'The Role of Mass Media in National building in Tanzania', University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1974 (unpublished mimeo). I owe most of the information in this section to tapes, programmes and interviews at Radio Tanzania, Dar-es-Salaam, June-August, 1984.
- 87 Besides programmes of drama in English broadcast through the external service, regular drama programmes in Kiswahili have included the weekly $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of Mahoka, Pwagu na Pwaguzi ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour), Ngonjera ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour), Mchezo wa Redio ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour) and other programmes such as adult education, music and light entertainment and children's programmes. A representative sample of plays, 1967-84, is shown in Appendix G.
- 88 These plays carry no credit for authors but RTD claims the credit as producer and they are available in RTD library.
- 89 From interview with Khalid Ponera, director of drama, RTD, Dar-es-Salaam, July 31st, 1984.
- 90 Amongst the active radio performers have been Hamisi Tajiri, Ally Keto, Nusra Suleiman, Rajabu Hatia, Ally Mwanjunju, Batholomew Milulu, Mariam Jusuf, Tunu Mrisho, Ibrahim Raha and Yusuf Jongo.
- 91 See William Shakespeare (trans. J.K. Nyerere), Julius Kaizari, Dar-es-Salaam, 1968, Mabepari wa Venisi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1969; Okot pBitek, Song of Lawino in Two Songs, Nairobi, 1972, Shaaban Robert, Kusadikika, Nairobi, 1951, with the adaptation by Gervas Moshiro, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974.
- 92 On theatre in education see amongst others John Hodgson and Martin Banham, eds., Drama in Education: the Annual Survey (1-3), London, 1972, 1973 and 1975; John O'Toole, Theatre in Education, London, 1976; Christine Redington, Can Theatre Teach?, Oxford, 1983, Brian Way, Development Through Drama, London 1967; N.A. Dodd and W. Hickson, Drama and Theatre in Education, London, 1971.

- 93 See Chapter 1 and also Penina Muhando 'Traditional African Theatre as a Pedagogical Institution', Ph.D. thesis, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1984.
- 94 This has been discussed by, amongst others, Ken Robinson in Exploring Theatre and Education, London, 1980, pp. 141-144.
- 95 See Notes 92 and 94 above.
- 96 On the development of education in Tanzania, see amongst others David R. Morrison, Education and Politics in Africa, The Tanzanian Case, London, 1976; Basic Facts About Education in Tanzania, The Ministry of National Education, 1980.
- 97 See Basic Facts About Education in Tanzania, pp.3-5.
- 98 Official manpower projections have usually determined amongst other things enrollment of students in University programmes. Official projects for manpower needed to be trained in the arts has been between 1-3% of total intake of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science. The enrollment has usually remained within the projections or gone lower. In 1974-77, for example, the 3% projection for manpower in the arts was reflected in the actual enrollment of 6 and 4 students for the respective years of 1974/75 and 1976/77. From Faculty of Arts and Social Science file F/ASS/S/5 no.75.
- 99 Part of this concern was evidenced during a workshop held in Arusha in 1981 in which representatives from the Ministry of Education, Butimba College of National Education, University of Dar-es-Salaam, teachers from secondary and primary schools met to discuss theatre development in the schools. From report of the workshop, Theatre Arts, University of Dar-es-Salaam.
- 100 The average intake of students each year since 1967 has been five (first year) but the number has fluctuated between the highest (13 in 1971/72) and one in 1983/84. From annual reports of the Department of Art, Music and Theatre, University of Dar-es-Salaam.
- 101 UMISETA = Umoja wa Michezo ya shule za Sekondari Tanzania. An organization which deals primarily with sports competitions for secondary schools which by 1978 numbered 148.

- 102 UMISAVETA = Umoja wa Michezo na Sanaa ya Vyuo vya Elimu Tanzania. Since 1971 this body has brought together Colleges of National Education to compete in sports, art and performances. There are 35 colleges by 1984.
- 103 Mukotani Ruyendo, 'Approaches to Theatre for Children and Youths', an unpublished paper, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1972.
- 104 Ibid. See children performing in Figures 29 & 30.
- 105 These plays have been performed by primary school students at competitions in 1967-68 and 1983-84 in Dar-es-Salaam.
- 106 Ibid.
- 107 The Merchant of Venice provided the central issue of 'the pound of flesh' used in an adaptation entitled Asiye na Huruma Hahurumiwi (He who has no mercy cannot find mercy) by St. Joseph Convent School in 1968.
- 108 The two examples used here are from The Hill Primary School in Dar-es-Salaam and the activities were carried out between 1982 and 1984.
- 109 See Chapter 1.
- 110 B.L. Leshoai in a report on the Central Zone Cultural Festival 29th September - 1st October, 1973, Dodoma, University of Dar-es-Salaam, p.7. (unpublished).
- 111 Penina O. Mlana, 'The Problems Obstructing the Development of Theatre in the Tanzanian Schools', Theatre Arts, University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1973, p.9. (unpublished).
- 112 See Chapters 3 and 4 where these plays are discussed.
- 113 In the early seventies only one play out of six was original or not previously entered into a competition.
- 114 The play was produced by Minaki Secondary School for the 1984 Dar-es-Salaam Schools Competitions.
- 115 This play was produced by Bihawana Secondary School and represented Dodoma in the Zonal Cultural competitions of 1984. The events of the play were partially based on Idi Amin's Uganda and partially on events reminiscent of Euripides' Antigone. The producers disclaimed and borrowings from the latter, however.

- 116 The list of plays produced by Butimba is included in Appendix H.
- 117 I owe the scripts and information to K. Gosori, tutor at Butimba since 1979.
- 118 British actors like Nick Owen and Jane Collins have held several training sessions at Butimba between 1981 and 1983.
- 119 Contained in an Internal Memorandum from Gabriel Ruhumbika to the Chairman of the Faculty Reorganizing Committee on 'Amalgamation of the Departments of Theatre Arts and Literature'. 24th November, 1970.
- 120 In a report by G.W.G. Wickham to the University College, Dar-es-Salaam, in which he recommended the establishment of Drama Studies, July 1965, Department of Theatre Arts, University of Dar-es-Salaam.
- 121 Ibid.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 Ibid.
- 124 See Wickham report, note 120.
- 125 See note 119.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 Wickham report, see note 120.
- 128 For a list of plays produced at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, see Appendix H. See Figures 7, 8, 9, 13 & 32.
- 129 Extensive discussions about the Institute were carried on between the University and the Ministry of Education between 1967 and 1970. Information from the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Dar-es-Salaam.
- 130 The restructuring of courses has been a major exercise since 1982 but implementation is yet to follow.
- 131 All these plays are discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.
- 132 While the University Drama Group has drawn membership from primarily the University community, Paukwa Theatre Group has had a mixed membership. On Paukwa, see Chapter 4.

133 These were views held by Tololwa Marti and E. Chambulikazi when interviewed in Dar-es-Salaam, September 28th, 1984.

CHAPTER 6

Popular Theatre, Development and Theatre Control

The phenomenon of popular theatre in Tanzania has received much attention since the end of the 1960s. Factors from both within and outside theatre practice have contributed to the interest and approaches given popular theatre especially in terms of development. Academic rethinking on historiography, economics, sociology, education, politics and the relation of these to development have been going on worldwide since the end of the Second World War.¹ In the sixties, Tanzania became one of the arenas where social scientists were vigorously debating and theorizing concepts of development and their implication to the Third World.² The impact of these has been twofold: a rejection of old modes of approaching and assessing development as well as bringing culture to the centre of development programmes.³ From within theatre practice, ideas have also been developing which have concerned the aesthetic production and consumption of theatre, as well as the specific concept of 'the popular' itself. In the wake of the Arusha Declaration, all these factors found fertile ground in Tanzania and have contributed to the types of activities in popular theatre. These activities as well as others in

theatre practice have developed within specific parameters of cultural expression and control.

1. Development and Popular Theatre

Amongst those who participated in the development debate was Walter Rodney who was in Tanzania from 1968 to 1974, where he wrote his How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.⁴ Like his contemporaries, Rodney saw development for the individual as 'increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well being'.⁵ This development of the individual was intimately tied to the economic production and the development of society as a whole:

A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment. This capacity of dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which they understand the laws of nature (science), on the extent to which they put that understanding into practice by devising tools (technology), and on the manner in which work is organized.⁶

What Rodney and the others were doing was to refute the previous tendencies of reducing development from a complex social phenomenon to an index of purely economic factors. They were challenging the 'modernization models' based on development as mainly increases in annual per capita national income or product and this was based on the development of experiences of Western countries. The new theorists found these models or modes theoretically inadequate, empirically invalid and developmentally ineffective.⁷ The view of development as

a complex phenomenon found its way in theatre for development models. In Tanzania, development within the framework of theatre for social development came to be described as:

the advancement of the total and collective effort of man - his potential, physical, mental, emotional status - towards the process of positive socio-economic change aimed at raising the standard of living and the quality of existence.⁸

These ideas rescued culture from its peripheral position and put it at the centre of development issues. In education, agriculture, technology, politics, economics as well as the arts, the people and their initiative became the focus of developmental projects. There was more scepticism shown towards programmes which were forced on the people from their leaders. Instead, community-based programmes and self-reliance were encouraged. The rationale behind this encouragement was the belief that this was a better approach in exploiting indigenous knowledge, organization, aetiology and communication for the people's development. Defending such an approach, Colletta and Kid have said:

The central thesis ... is that a culture-based nonformal education development strategy enables new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be introduced within the framework of existing knowledge, cultural patterns, institutions, values, and human resources. That the indigenous culture is the fabric within which development can best be woven is based upon three assumptions: indigenous elements have traditional legitimacy for participants in development programs; these elements contain symbols that express and identify various valid perceptions of reality; and they serve multiple functions - they can involve, entertain, instruct and inform.⁹

This type of developmental strategy gave popular theatre its legitimacy as a possible effective tool for social change. Popular theatre was heavily supported, then, as a form of folk media which could provide alternative means of communication to effect developmental objectives.¹⁰

The practice of popular theatre for development in the seventies was also greatly influenced by the work of Paolo Freire whose ideas and methodology have been made accessible through his three books:

Cultural Action for Freedom, Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Pedagogy in Process.¹¹

Freire's ideas and methodology can be summed up in the notions of participatory research, conscientization and praxis.¹²

While all these ideas have been used variously in popular theatre, it has been Freire's ideas on conscientization which have been widely used. Freire sees the theatre as an essential and effective tool in the process of conscientization. He sees the effectiveness of drama, for example, as lying in the presentation of themes and issues through problem-posing. He advocates the use of theatre to pose questions about reality and its contradictions in order to lead the people to decide what solutions they need.¹³ Freire's influence in this can be seen in a diversity of community based cultural activities in such countries as Tanzania, Kenya, Botswana, Malawi, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Jamaica, India and in various countries in South America.¹⁴

The development of popular theatre for development has been in tune with ideas which have defined the concept of 'popular' in culture and theatre. In Tanzania, for example, there have been different ideas and approaches in the use of theatre for development and these have been variously identified as popular theatre. The existence of different theatre practices which parade as 'popular' has tended to confuse what is and what is not actually 'popular' within cultural production. The idea of the 'popular' carries with it political and aesthetic

dimensions which take into consideration the production and consumption of cultural elements within a historical context - its origin and target are the people themselves. The existence of popular forms is tied up with the people's struggles as an oppressed majority and the forms have a particular political relationship to these struggles. They rescue, incorporate and preserve elements which 'serve the interests of the popular classes'. Brecht called this an 'aggressive concept' of the popular.

Popular means: intelligible to the broad masses, adopting and enriching their forms of expression/assuming their standpoint, confirming and correcting it/representing the most progressive section of the people so that it can assume leadership and therefore [be] intelligible to other sections of the people as well/relating to traditions and developing them/communicating to that portion of the people which strives for the leadership the achievement of the section that at present rules the nation/¹⁵

Brecht, however, was looking at the work of the 'progressive' theatre practitioners who were not themselves members of the 'popular classes' - those elements of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals who wanted to align themselves with the oppressed groups. Their work becomes 'popular' only when it serves the interest of the people. But Green has pointed out that the promotion of the people's interest as the decisive criterion in popular culture is not enough and can be misleading. It has to grow out of and exist for the people.¹⁶ The work of the 'progressive' elements outside the popular classes are incorporated in so far as their alignment with these classes is so total that the people's interests are their interests. As a manifestation of the people's spontaneous expression of their political and social being,

popular culture is never static. It is constantly defining itself within the struggle between dominant and oppositional forces in society. The forms that popular culture takes are then constantly being rearranged and imbued with new meaning, new values. Hall has described this as a movement of resistance and containment in 'which some cultural practices are driven out of the centre of popular life, actively marginalized!'¹⁷ But the process goes also in the opposite direction where elements in the margin are brought at the centre of popular life.

Popular culture defined from its originality and ideological commitment has more often than not been overtaken by an analysis which has taken into account the element of 'destination' only. This has been a quantitative and statistical analysis in which a given cultural product has been evaluated by the number of consumers of the product.¹⁸ The product has been endowed with popularity because of its widespread mass nature. In Tanzania, the development of popular theatre has followed the two concepts of the popular and has moved from claiming its popularity because of its 'destination', to the other which claims its popularity from 'originality' and class objectives.

In spite of its growth in the seventies and eighties, popular theatre used for developmental purposes has not been without precedents. Theatre was effectively used as a pedagogical institution in traditional societies. This function was to be reclaimed in popular theatre practices for contemporary developmental objectives. As one supporter of popular theatre has pointed out:

... there are many reasons why our forefathers chose to use

song, dance, drums and masks to educate their young to comment on the socio-political conditions in their societies and to preserve their historical legends ... It was the function of our traditional theatre not merely to entertain but also to instruct ...¹⁹

The colonial educators, administrators and missionaries also tried to use theatre to propagate religious values, Western modes of living, hygiene, agriculture and morals. In spite of the narrow understanding of traditional performances, the colonialists saw the advantage of using the African's 'inherent histrionic ability and the age-old custom of gathering together to listen to a story'.²⁰ Contemporary practitioners, however, were to present different approaches and different motives in using theatre as propaganda. These motives were linked to pressures exerted on theatre to make it accountable to the struggles in national development. This meant that theatre had to justify its existence in the poor countries. This pressure has been described by Chris Kamlongera who has been an activist in popular theatre for development:

In the West perhaps the role of the artist as an aesthetic is the prime factor in his survival. But in the Third World it is a matter of whether there is enough real justification for its continued existence. The little capital that is available to government should be directed towards more tangible results other than mere aesthetic thirst and quests.²¹

Theatre practitioners used popular theatre then 'to stand up and be counted'. How theatre practitioners effected this can be seen in Tanzania through primarily two approaches which can be summarized as:

- a) Taking theatre to the people;
- and b) Theatre for Social Development (TSD).

While both of these have assumed the label of popular theatre for development, their methodology and their activities have differed. Moreover, while 'Taking Theatre to the People' was a popular movement from the late sixties to the mid seventies, Theatre for Social Development grew and picked up momentum in the late seventies and early eighties. As such, the concepts and rationalization of the movements can be found in the political and social realities of the times. It can be seen as no coincidence, for example, that Taking Theatre to the People gained popularity in the wake of the Arusha Declaration and the conscientization of intellectuals in socialist ideology. It was part of the movement to bridge class differences. Theatre for Social Development, however, christened itself as such at a time when there was great disillusionment with social and political practices which resulted because or in spite of the Arusha Declaration. These two movements have incorporated these factors in their objectives as well as practice of theatre.

2. Taking Theatre to the People

'Taking Theatre to the People' is a phenomenon in which the mostly 'educated' part of a society makes theatre available to the other parts which it thinks are deprived of theatre experience either totally or in particular forms. Those who take theatre to the people believe that whatever the people have in terms of theatre, theatre practice can be either accelerated or changed for the better if 'the people' are exposed to what these advocates know. The people, in the case of

Tanzania, are the urban workers and rural peasants for whom theatre projects were formulated by the University of Dar-es-Salaam, the Ministry of Culture, Secondary Schools and Colleges of National Education. The objective here was twofold: on one hand the people who were starved for theatre would have their hunger satisfied, on the other, it would enable the intellectuals to come down from their 'ivory towers' and mingle with the people. This was in line with national objectives, especially after 1967, to close the gap between the educated and the common people. The underlying motive of this movement, however, was in educating the people to accept new aesthetics as well as social reality embodied in the form and content of the plays. Bob Leshoai who was very active in 'taking theatre to the people' at the University of Dar-es-Salaam provided the following rationale for the movement:

Going to the masses is the thing! The masses learn and assimilate what is brought to them. When we want their support to 'fight the colonial oppressor' we go to them; and now we have to fight and break the shackles of ignorance we must also go to them.²²

Ignorance in this case is not only illiteracy but Leshoai is referring to an aesthetic ignorance which hinders the people from appreciating alien forms and moving ahead in developing the theatre. Since most of the plays took the form of 'literary drama' it must have been the dramatic techniques and modes of production as well as the social messages in the plays which the people were supposed to learn. This is confirmed by Leshoai's concept of theatre as meaning 'acting and writing'.²³ The people might have had some ideas of acting but they

definitely lacked the skills of literary drama. This was reinforced by the need of accelerating the development of a modern Tanzanian theatre by pioneering what was seen as 'popular drama amongst the general public'.

In order to encourage the schools and the public to participate more in the growth of theatre in Tanzania, the Department of Theatre Arts undertakes yearly short theatre tours outside Dar-es-Salaam. These tours also include workshops in play directing, dance, music, acting, publicity techniques and seminars on the theatre where the special problems that affect theatre in Tanzania are discussed.²⁴

Elsewhere in East and Central Africa similar projects have been carried out by such groups as the Chikwakwa theatre in Zambia, The Travelling Theatres of Makerere University in Uganda, University of Malawi and Nairobi University.²⁵ It is difficult, however, to evaluate the impact that these travelling theatres have had on their audience. There was no doubt in Tanzania in the early seventies that the performances were enthusiastically attended and received. There has been no follow up, however, to assess to what extent the people initiated theatre activities or adopted methods advocated by the travellers.

The emphatic cry in Tanzania of 'take theatre to the people' had another political and social objective. It was meant to expose the people to ideas and social reality close to their experience as well as those which have been in tune with national political objectives. Athol Fugard and Bob Leshoai became popular authors because their ideas were seen as being in tune with the national anti-apartheid attitude. Hussein, Kaduma and Mloma were spokesmen of the immediate

reality. The repertoire of the travelling theatres, therefore, included Hussein's Kinjeketile and Mashetani, Athol Fugard's The Blood Knot and The Island, Kaduma's Dhamana and Mabatini, Mlama's Hatia, Ruganda's The Burdens and Leshoai's The Prodigal Son.²⁶ Written plays, however, were not the only items in the repertoire. Taking theatre to the people also used improvised plays especially when performing in rural areas. Unlike the written plays, the improvised ones took into more consideration the local targeted audience and their cultural expressions. These plays were seen as popular theatre in their accessibility as popular entertainment and artistic expression. A 1969 workshop explained this theatre thus:

This theatre is concerned with the enactment of simple but not naive stories which are enjoyed because of their relevance to the social conditions of the people watching them.²⁷

In spite of this social specificity in the improvised plays, their objectives in terms of development were as general as the objectives of the written plays in 'taking theatre to the people' movement. The most important factor for both of them (at least in the case of Tanzania) was that these plays were performed to bridge the gap between the educated and the rest of the people. The mere fact that students and teachers left the comforts of their ivory towers, put up with the inconveniences of rural and urban life and tried to find some common grounds of theatre communication between them and the masses, was, in the realities of the late sixties and early seventies, a 'revolutionary' act. But 'Taking Theatre to the People' was a self-

conscious movement in which the propagators were more concerned with 'giving' the people theatre than learning from the people or establishing the performances as a two way aesthetic challenge. The movement assumed, albeit unconsciously, that there was a vacuum to be filled in the people's theatre expression and became too much of a missionary activity.

Besides its objectives and approach, the impact of 'Taking Theatre to the People' was limited by the frequency of the performances and the organization of the groups participating. Take the example of the Department of Theatre of the University of Dar-es-Salaam which was very active in the movement. The plays which toured depended very much on the material and financial support the department received from the University. But the University did not always take the department's project as a priority. An instance has been quoted when the department was given funds to tour a play provided the money would later be refunded by the department from the play's gate fees.²⁸ Charging for performances is hardly a positive method to encourage the urban and rural poor to attend. The tours were also affected by limited time. They could only occur during the allotted short and long vacations of the University. At best, this meant two or three times a year in areas not too far from Dar-es-Salaam. The possible touring times had also to be shared by students' other academic and social commitments which most often took precedence.

While 'taking theatre to the people' can be seen as a non-aggressive theatre approach towards developmental issues, there was also

developing at the same time an approach to popular theatre which became aggressively developmental. The improvised plays of cultural groups which became part of national campaigns for education, health, villagization and Ujamaa were part of this movement. But it was the development of approaches to participatory research, on one hand, and exposure to popular theatre methodologies pursued elsewhere in the Eastern and Southern African region on the other that gave the push for theatre for development to become popular from 1979 onwards.

One of the major projects which popularized participatory research in Tanzania was the Jipemoyo project.²⁹ This was launched in 1975 as a bilateral project between the Ministry responsible for culture in Tanzania and the Academy of Finland. Jipemoyo was conceived to work on the premise that 'culture and tradition can become a source of energy and reactivity for innovation and development'.³⁰ It proposed to analyze culture as both a deterring and motivational factor in the process of change. The project's methodology favoured the participatory approach rather than other conventional methods. This methodology has been described by Swantz, one of the organizers for Jipemoyo, as:

to experiment methods of approach in development research which incorporates people from all levels in the process of research and creates in them an awareness of their own resources.³¹

Through this approach, the gap between researcher and researched would be minimized while positive social change would be built on the people's own traditions and practices. Thus traditional knowledge, technology as well as cultural expression would become important factors in

effecting change. By the late seventies, Jipemoyo's methodology was being popularized through publications and workshops. There was at the same time a link made between the participatory methodology of Jipemoyo and popular theatre movements in Botswana, Zambia, Kenya and as far away as Asia and South America. The link was emphasized during a workshop in Morogoro in 1979 where activists using both the participatory methodology and popular theatre met to exchange experiences and underline their common objectives.³² They found two areas in their approaches which they shared: a preoccupation with a particular community as both subject and object of development, and an analytical process which aimed at exposing root-causes for problems in a given community.

The Morogoro workshop as well as others held outside Tanzania made popular theatre for development familiar to the Tanzanian theatre practitioners.³³ Through these, popular theatre for development came to be understood as a process which took three considerations:

- a) a proper knowledge of the community as a historical socio-economic organization;
- b) an analysis of root-causes to factors which inhibit development;
- c) participation of the community in expressing the above and adopting methods for change.

Because of these considerations, popular theatre for development had, by the late seventies, acquired a process which followed five steps: research, analysis, creation of scenarios based on particular problems,

performance and follow up activities to ensure change. This process was adopted in Tanzania in the early eighties and is best exemplified in the Theatre for Social Development project in Malya inaugurated in 1982 and a TSD workshop held in Bagamoyo in 1983.

3. Theatre for Social Development: 2 Case Studies

The aim of the Theatre for Social Development in Malya has been described as to exploit the theatre as a participatory communication medium in posing developmental problems, create political and social awareness amongst the participants and seek solutions to the selected problems:

Participants in the project use their own theatre forms to pose developmental problems according to their own context. Through the creative process the problems are posed, discussed and solutions suggested.³⁴

This aim recognizes that for the people to participate meaningfully in actions of development, they must be aware of the problems, their causes and the need for possible solutions. Theatre is made a tool to attain this awareness. The aims and approach for the Theatre for Social Development in Malya were formulated by a team of theatre practitioners from the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The team has been acting as catalyst and its participation in the project has been through visits called 'contacts' each lasting from one to two weeks. Between 1982 and 1984, the team had six 'contacts' altogether, each with different objectives in the development of the project.

The first contact was a familiarization tour of Mwanza Region to

study the political, social and economic set up of the area. The team had discussions with not only the Malya villagers but also with Party and Government authorities from village to regional levels. What the team found out about Malya in this research period was to play an important part in understanding the problems, their causes and solutions as well as how theatre can play a part.

Malya is a village in Kwimba district, Mwanza region.³⁵ It is situated almost on the southern shores of Lake Victoria and as villages go, is easily reached by train through the Central Railways, by bus from Mwanza town and by air at Nyambiti airport. Besides the Sukumas who are the original inhabitants of Malya, various other tribes have made their home there - Nyamwezi, Pogoro, Haya, Chaga, etc. Some of these are pensioners who have retired to Malya, others are there because of their work in several government and party institutions. The College of Arts of the Ministry of Information and Culture is to be moved to Malya, so various workers are already at work laying the infrastructure. The majority of the villagers, however, are either peasants or dealers in petty trading. Many Christian Churches have settled in Malya. Amongst the most influential are the Anglican, the Catholic, the Seventh Day Adventist and the African Inland Church. Islam is also practised by a small number of the villagers.

Although Malya is administered as an Ujamaa village, its social structure is that of a semi-urban area, neither a self-contained village nor a town but contains elements of both. This reality is due to historical factors. Once, Malya was a district centre as well as

the meeting place of the Sukuma chiefs. As such, it attracted businesses, administrators and other personnel in non agricultural activities. In their wake came bars, hotels, retail shops, black marketeering and a large population of transients. Farming, though still the mainstay of the village, attracts only part of the 5,000 population. Cultural patterns are reflected in the co-existence of traditional patterns of life alongside Western behavioural modes - traditional performances, discotheques, films, Christianity, traditional beliefs, etc. Thus problems of both an urban and rural nature plague Malya - land shortage, unemployment, prostitution, robberies, corruption, health problems.

When the team returned for its second contact, they found great enthusiasm in the village for the project. The villagers had gone so far as to form 'a village core group' which would work closely with the team in the theatre workshops and productions. During this and subsequent contacts, the work was done through discussions about village problems and the approaches to dramatize these using familiar theatre devices. Emphasis was placed on exposing the problems with their root causes through effective theatrical means. The team's reports indicate the willingness of the villagers to probe deeper into problems existing within larger social, political and economic contexts. Two productions done by the villagers as part of the TSD project illustrate the difference in awareness of the problem which in turn affected the production. Both 'plays' dealt with the same problem - the unwanted pregnancy among the youth. The first play went like

this:

... a certain couple adopted a very rigid manner of bringing up their daughter. She was not allowed to go anywhere and when the parents left, they swept the compound clean so that they could see the footprints of any man who came to the house in their absence. But the girl gets pregnant by out-smarting the parents. However, the man responsible refuses to take responsibility and the girl commits suicide. The man is taken to court and sentenced to death.³⁶

The villagers had prepared this play on their own before the team arrived. During the discussions which followed, the villagers expressed their concern about the increased number of unwanted pregnancies among Malyan youth. They pointed out that it was not so much that the girls had to carry the stigma of loose women for most of their lives but rather the economic and social burden the parents of the girls had to bear. They became responsible for the upbringing of the babies as well as continuing to support their children who found it difficult to find employment or husbands. The discussions, however, brought out some of the underlying causes for the situation: unemployment among the youth, inflation, poverty, education, corruption and changing values. Suicide was rejected as a solution, so was also the death penalty for the male 'culprits'. Another play was then devised incorporating the villagers' ideas and their new perception of the contributory factors. For twelve days the team, the village core group as well as other villagers who were able to attend³⁷, discussed, improvised, devised and revised the play.

The storyline was (about) a school girl from a poor village who is lured by her girl-friend to go to various entertainment places including the Disco. The friend has a man-friend who is a businessman and she shares the many gifts she is given

with her friend, the poor girl. The businessman is attracted by the girl and starts luring her by giving her expensive gifts. In the end the girl falls into the trap and gets pregnant. The businessman drops the girls, both of whom are pregnant and are quarrelling with each other because of the man. The girl is expelled from school. Her parents take the businessman to court but he bribes the judge and gets away with a very light sentence. The parents are dissatisfied and they take the case to the village government and demand justice.³⁸

The village elders, however, are unable to provide a single solution after discussing many alternatives of both an economic and social nature. The play was left open-ended. More discussions followed this performance focusing on what the villagers could do to solve the problem. A criticism of the play was also included.

This second play of the same problem was quite different from the first. Unlike the straight dialogue-centred presentation of the first version, the second used dances, songs, story-telling, recitations, mime as well as dialogue. It made the problem of the unwanted pregnancies much more complex within Malyan reality. The problem became social rather than individual and the solutions to be found by the community itself.

Two more plays performed by the villagers of Malya show the same process of trying to come to grips with community problems. One was on health and the other on racketeering. In the first play titled Waganga (The Healers) the villagers were concerned with problems of medicine and healing in both the traditional and modern approaches. While both were shown to be effective when genuine skills and commitment played a part, there were inhibiting factors in both which adversely affected the people. Dishonest practitioners, corruption

and material gain were shown to be part of the problems in healing practices. The play tried to conscientize the people to be aware of these problems and at the same time recognize the necessity of the positive elements in traditional and contemporary medicine to work together. But the play and the analysis of the problems of medicine and healing showed the situation to be complex. Such items as transport, health facilities, bureaucratic organizations and the people's own beliefs were shown to play a part in these problems. The connection between a particular problem and factors seemingly outside it were also portrayed in the play Racketeers. The problem here was the accessibility of essential commodities in the village. While racketeers were shown to be the culprits who benefited from the scarcity of essential commodities, the whole distribution system and the law were shown to be part of the problem. The story line for the play was as follows:

A group of racketeers are selling goods in the street for exorbitant prices. When they are apprehended by the police, 'the boss' of the racketeers telephones the Police Commander and orders their release. To celebrate this victory, 'the boss' entertains government officials and the General Manager of the Regional Trading Company, the national commodity distributing agency. It is no wonder then that while the people receive very little from the agency, the racketeers get all they want to continue their business. The people then decide that they must start their own war on racketeering. 39

During discussions, it was revealed that the guidelines from the Party and the Government on shops were part of the problem. There was only one officially recognized shop in the village and this was not meeting the needs of the people. Other cooperative shops could not be opened because the guidelines stipulated that initial capital of 100,000

shillings was required before a group was allowed to open a shop. This was beyond the means of the villagers and so the scarcity of shops aggravated the availability of commodities.

The follow up for the plays varied from situation to situation. For the most part the villagers kept asking questions and delving deeper in the contributory factors to the problems. In a few instances, the performances and discussions led to some practical activities. Take the example of the problems of the Youth and employment. The discussion after the play on this problem revealed that one of the problems in the village in youth employment was the distribution of land. The elders had control of the land and unless the young people worked in their elders' land they could not engage in agriculture. The situation had to be reversed. The discussion ended with the elders of the village apportioning land for the exclusive use of the youth. The youth problems also led the villagers to question why certain small scale industries in which many young people were employed had died. An inquiry was commissioned and it was revealed that some party officials were responsible for the defunct industries. In the case of the soap industry, an official had sold the needed caustic soda to a private businessman and the lack of this input led to the closure of the soap industry. The drum of caustic soda was retrieved and the commissar was given a hard time. As a direct result of the discussions two youth projects were started: a cooperative farm and a cooperative youth stall at the village market. By the end of 1984, the youth were receiving outside financial help to

expand these activities.

In spite of these developments the TSD project in Malya has not been without problems. These have stemmed out of factors within the village and the core group itself. When the team visited Malya in its third contact, for example, it found out that theatre performances and the activities of the core group were almost at a standstill. This was the result of the head of the African Inland Church (AIC) in Malya forbidding his followers from participating in theatre activities. Since some of the leaders of the core group belonged to this Church, activities ceased while village elders tried to find a solution. The problem was solved when leaders from all religious denominations discussed the problem during a meeting attended by the team. It appeared that the AIC leader had never participated in the village performances but was led by church attitude that theatre was the work of Satan. It was the other religious leaders who ridiculed his attitude and convinced him that the performances were for moral and socio-economic good. After the meeting activities continued as before. But by the beginning of 1984, during the team's sixth contact, there were certain developments within the core group and its activities which became matters of concern. Even though the group was functioning again at the time of the team's visit, it had experienced low morale and leadership problems several months earlier. Many key members of the group had moved away from the village. Some of them had left without accounting for some of the group's financial assets. At the same time, new members had joined the group. These were

responsible for directing the performances of the group towards a non-problematic approach for a general rather than the specific audience of Malya. The previous successes of the group convinced the participants that the performances should be seen by people outside Malya. The move would also enable the group to generate an income from the performances and this would in turn be used for the group's activities. Plays were therefore improvised hastily without the analytical methodology of TSD imposed on the issues and problems. At their best, these were entertaining comedic pieces but did not invite questions or conscientize. The repertoire included scenarios which showed the confrontation between a naive villager and urban life as well as the adventures of a selfish host and his visitor. While these contributed to the general theatre activities of the group and village, they had deviated from some aspects of TSD. The group was aware of this and during discussions with the team pointed out that the absence of many old members familiar with the TSD methodology was the major cause of the situation. Some of the new active members had brought their own way of improvising plays learned from urban cultural groups and Vichekesho performances.

The concern was then how to harness this and the other new inputs in the framework of the original TSD objectives. For, besides the Vichekesho scenarios, the new members brought such skills as acrobatics, mime and traditional dances formerly not used by the group. It was agreed that adjustments had to be made in future work so that the new inputs could be appropriately harnessed in TSD.



Figure 33



Figure 34

Figures 33 & 34: Popular theatre for development in Malya, Mwanza, 1982.

The project in Malya has been unique amongst TSD activities because of its extended time of existence. A more common approach has been through short time seminars, workshops or limited 'contacts' between an involved team and a targeted community. Because the methodology of popular theatre for social development has been seen to be of recent development, the workshops and seminars have also been used as training venues to familiarize others unfamiliar with the methodology. One such workshop was held in Bagamoyo in 1983. The training programme was incorporated in the workshop so that the participants were trained and at the same time created performances with the residents of Bagamoyo. As in Malya, the familiar process of research, analysis, improvisation of scenarios and performance was followed. But the performances and the questions which arose were unique to Bagamoyo's reality and contemporary problems. These were found to be of an economic and social nature embedded in Bagamoyo's history.

Amongst the problems which the people of Bagamoyo pointed out were poverty, hunger, water shortage, transport and health problems, witchcraft, robberies by men and beasts. It was found out, however, some of these were aggravated by entrenched attitudes which inhibited both individual and community action. These attitudes were part of Bagamoyo's history which made it a racially stratified society. Class and social groupings did not depend on economic realities alone but also on long held attitudes which the groups carried themselves. Historically, Bagamoyo was an important commercial town before the

turn of the century. Its open beaches were suitable for dhows which brought not only commodities for trade but also an influx of settlers. It has been reported that by the 1890s, Bagamoyo had 'a population whose social hierarchy still rested on commerce, slave owning and Islam'.⁴⁰ While Bagamoyo has lost its former importance as a commercial town, attitudes about social hierarchies have lingered. By 1983 people were still talking about 'mamwinyi' (masters) who claimed their position from tradition and attitudes rather than economic or material possessions. This attitude of 'umwinyi' (masterhood) was seen as a drawback in attempts to solve Bagamoyo's problems. The TSD project, therefore, took this situation and made it the focus of the workshop activities.

Rather than tackle a specific problem which might have led to immediate practical follow up, the workshop created performances which tried to broaden the people's awareness of how the 'attitudes' in the community developed and how they were undermining their economic progress. Each day of the workshop was divided between time spent in discussions and improvisations with three chosen communities within Bagamoyo and time spent creating scenarios and assessment at the workshop base. After performing to the individual communities, the devised theatre pieces were performed together at the workshop base. More than 800 residents of Bagamoyo turned up for the performances.

The first devised piece chronicled the coming of the Arabs to Bagamoyo, the disintegration of native culture and development of Arabic and Islamic culture. The focus, however, was the development

of exploitative practices in the fishing industry perpetuated by the Arabs and those who took over from them. Tired of being culturally undermined and economically exploited, the fishermen go on strike, organize themselves and start a cooperative. The second improvised play took as its issues the attitudes of 'umwinyi' and how they have affected peasants. It showed how a prosperous peasant becomes poor because of the attitudes and activities of 'mamwinyi'. They spread fears of witchcraft as a method to discourage him from working on the land. They temporarily succeed and the peasant and his family turn to petty trading instead of farming. But, everybody including 'mamwinyi' is a petty trader in Bagamoyo. When the peasant's poverty becomes acute he decides to leave town. His neighbours are unhappy about his decision but while convincing him to stay they take a critical look at their situation and how they can solve their problems. They decide to stand together and fight the 'mamwinyi' and their witchcraft. The third theatre piece exposed also problems of 'umwinyi'. A family of 'mamwinyi' refuse to work because working is no activity for a 'mwigwana' (a civilized free man). They are so concerned about their status that the parents become blind to the fact that their daughter is selling herself in order to support them. Her life is ruined while the parents are busy frittering away time and playing idle. This performance used puppets which the participants made and learned to manipulate during the workshop. It was a much shorter event compared to the other two which incorporated dance-drama, music, story-telling, poetry and songs both familiar and unfamiliar to the communities but were easy to understand.



Figure 35



Figure 36

Figures 35 & 36: Theatre for Development, Bagamoyo, 1983.

The performances in Malya and Bagamoyo display some elements of a common approach to their creation. They show, for example, a strong preference for non-dialogue scenarios. The team in each case seems to have gone out of its way to use dance, music, songs, recitations and traditional tales and to minimize dialogue. The elements used were drawn from both traditional performances and improvisations held each day. Each day's activities were preceded by communal performances in dance, music, songs, recitations and story-telling. Most of these were familiar to those present and so participation was easy. Individuals who knew dances or songs unfamiliar to others also came forward and taught everyone how to perform these. There were also improvisations of songs, dances or recitations on issues under discussion and the participants were free to create their own songs or dances. This process was repeated when the specific scenarios for the plays were improvised. As a result in Bagamoyo, for example, most dialogue scenes were to be found in the puppet play. The play about the peasant who is affected by class conflicts and becomes poor was almost without spoken dialogue. Instead, these were sung when they occurred and the play was completely a dance-musical-drama. In Malya, the play about the pregnant girl had several scenes with spoken dialogue but these contained within them dances, laments, love songs and recitations. Besides these elements being used in the individual scenes, the plays show a tendency to use events which are celebratory in nature and provide occasions for incorporation of much communal dancing and singing. The opening scenes for most of the plays have

such events. 'The problems of youth' play opened with a scene set during the celebrations of Saba Saba - the national peasant day holiday. Besides the communal dancing and singing, this sequence allowed the incorporation of performances by special groups like the school choirs and dancing groups as well as traditional performers from neighbouring villages. In Bagamoyo, the play about the peasant began with a scene where he, his family and neighbours were celebrating his big harvest. These celebratory events occurred later in the other plays but they were always part of the progression of the play. Apart from these, TSD performances were always preceded by dancing and singing which were outside the context of the plays. Processional dancing and singing circling the village and continuing for a long time at the performance venue were a common characteristic of all the performances. All these events made participation in the performances easier and sometimes obligatory on the part of the audience.

Another major characteristic of the plays has been the way conflict is used. The plays from both Malya and Bagamoyo display a strong use of conflicts which are exposed through the individual and class relationships. The problems of oppression, exploitation, poverty or the unemployed have been shown to be the result of conflicts between opposing elements or interests in society. Most often, the plays expose linkages between the conflicts at the local level and in the larger national or international community. While the conflicts manifest themselves in various social forms, they also lead to factors

which are economically based. The conflicts sometimes develop to points of crisis which force the participants in it to adjust not always to their best interests. It is this aspect of adjustment and man's ability to change which has given the plays as well as the whole process of TSD an optimistic characteristic. They both point to the fact that there is always a set of choices which man is presented with and it is the understanding of these choices as well as picking the best to suit his interests that underlie man's development. But this general optimism is shown to be due to man's potential to change as a social being rather than through his own idiosyncratic behaviour. Characterization of the participants in the conflicts is a case in point. There is a tendency to show individuals whose dominant traits show them incapable of change. The oppressors and the oppressed are usually shown to possess no contradictory element which exposes their potential to act contrary to their established behaviour. The sense of surprise and unexpectedness which are the results of choices residing in the contradictions are not always present. But the absence of character contradictions has been overshadowed by the exposition of contradictions within the social and political structures. Most plays contain within them contradictions between what people say and what they do or show two opposing activities carried out by the same individuals. These characteristics are exemplified in the play about racketeering in Malaya. The racketeers show no indication of being potentially 'good' nor are the peasants shown to be potentially 'bad'. But the play puts its emphasis on the contradictions of the

political and managerial groups. The help and support which these groups are supposed to give the people are contradicted by their activities which aggravate the people's exploitation. This handling of the conflicts and contradictions can be seen to be tied to the ideological and aesthetic approach of TSD which tries to situate the problems in society rather than the individual.

The people of Malya and Bagamoyo have shown great enthusiasm for TSD. The great turn outs at the discussions, rehearsals and performances have shown their interest in the projects. The analysis of problems inside and outside the performances has no doubt opened up some political and social awareness. In the case of Malya, some specific solutions to certain problems followed the performances and discussions. Within the framework of both projects, therefore, certain general and specific objectives can be seen as having been realized. The projects, nevertheless, highlight and pose questions about the process of theatre for development within the projects and the whole movement of TSD inside and outside Tanzania. The questions and concern arise from primarily three areas: the organization and venues for TSD; the role of the catalyst group or the animateurs; and the nature of ideology within TSD.

The activities of theatre for development have occurred, for the most part, through short term events like the Bagamoyo project. The time has not permitted viable continuity nor has it given enough space to pursue the many objectives usually given to the projects. Except for Malya, follow up activities have usually been difficult to

organize at the end of the workshops conducted mostly by people outside the communities. Even in Malya, the visits of the team have been too sporadic and far in between. These visits and what happens during and after them have given rise to the question of the role of the team as animateurs. There seems to be a conflict between the recognized role of an outside catalyst group and the need to put that role in the hands of the communities themselves. In Malya, the visiting team tried to establish a catalyst group by creating the village core group. Events have shown, however, that in spite of the existence of the core group, the team was still needed to ensure the continuity of the project. While confirming the necessity of an outside group as a major component of TSD, the Malya experience does not invalidate the need to institute this group within the community. Things might have been different in Malya if the membership of the core group was more stable or the team responsible was part of the social organization of the village. There is much to support the use of animateurs whose other functions call for continuous presence in the communities. These animateurs, however, have been too few in Tanzania, a fact which necessitated the training of 20 theatre arts students in TSD methodology during the Bagamoyo workshop. More animateurs might come out of the University of Dar-es-Salaam and Bagamoyo College of Arts which have professed an interest in instituting TSD in their curriculum. Another source might be workers in extension services attached to villages and communities. But this source has so far been sidestepped in favour of people with a strong background of theatre experience. This has been

part of an attitude which sees the effectiveness of TSD as depending on what theatre can offer as a communication and aesthetic medium. It has meant that the role of the theatre event and the skills needed to effect it have been more emphasized in the Tanzanian projects than in other countries. Given the fact that this element has put a limitation on the number of people who can be animateurs in TSD, the involvement of extension workers might become a necessary step.

The use of animateurs as catalysts for conscientization in TSD has also opened up ideological issues. A high level of political consciousness has always been stressed. The problem has been the role of the ideological perspective of the catalyst groups in the conscientization process. There has been a general agreement that the ideological commitment and bias of the involved groups should not be imposed on the people. Brian Crow and Michael Etherton have warned:

However sincerely concerned the members of the group may be with raising the consciousness of less advantaged people, there is an inevitable temptation for them to believe, quite sincerely, that raising the people's consciousness is the same as getting the people to see the correctness of their own common ideology.⁴¹

This warning underscores a dilemma which TSD practitioners have had to face in Tanzania. The whole process of conscientization assumes that there is a particular way of looking at reality - an ideological bias - which is needed to understand that reality, its problems and the potential solutions. The fact that conscientization is needed at all, assumes the lack or low level of the ideological perspective of the people involved. It is inevitable then that those with critical awareness, such as the catalyst groups, are exercising a form of ideolog-

ical imposition on others who lack this awareness. The question has become not that ideological imposition should not take place but how it should be effected without force. In the Bagamoyo project, for example, the problem of witchcraft was a sensitive issue amongst the people. Most believed that it existed. The animateurs were sceptical. The animateurs were aware that they could not impose their view on the people. But the process of analyzing the problem and the manner of posing questions on it pushed the people towards scepticism. This has meant that the very process of TSD has imposed upon the people an ideological perspective. It has happened each time that TSD has not only used the people's traditional forms but has attempted to overcome contradictions within the traditional culture. An ideological bias has therefore been imposed in which a critical assessment of progressive and unprogressive elements within the people's traditional practices has taken place. The events in Malya and Bagamoyo have had this ideological imposition which seems to be a major factor in TSD.

The role of the animateurs and their ideology raises the question whether TSD has provided an alternative ideological perspective to that of the dominant ruling hegemony. The objectives and practice of TSD in Tanzania has shown to be in line with the idealistic objectives of the ruling ideology. What TSD has managed to do is to translate some of the objectives and provide a forum for their actualization in ways that the ruling group has so far failed to do. Some of these objectives can be found within the Arusha Declaration itself and some in the subsequent policy and ideological pronouncements of national

leaders. There has been great emphasis in TSD on self-reliance, for example. TSD has stressed the understanding of problems and their possible solutions at the community level. Just as Arusha underlined the primacy of self-reliance to be the basis of national development, TSD made community initiatives the basis of its development. The discussions and follow up activities in Malya and Bagamoyo show a bias for activities which the communities can carry out themselves. Even the use of the community's own cultural expressions supports the idea of self-reliance and utilization of available resources. Nyerere has stressed many times that the poor cannot solve their poverty by depending on others. One of the problems he cited while evaluating the Arusha Declaration in 1977 was the failure of Tanzanians to embrace self-reliance as an attitude and practice in their activities. He went further and emphasized:

At all times when we are faced with a problem, or a new project is being thought of, our first question must be: what can we ourselves in this village, or in this district, or in this region, or in this country do to solve this problem?⁴²

These are the same questions posed in the TSD projects. The idea of self-reliance in TSD, however, goes hand in hand with the understanding of how the problems exist and how they affect the individual and community development. This process, inherent in the conscientization process of TSD, is close to what Nyerere sees as the task of education:

It has to liberate him [man] from the habit of submitting to circumstances which reduce his dignity as if they were immutable. And it has to liberate him from the shackles of technical ignorance so that he can make and use the tools of organization and creation for the development of himself and his fellow men.⁴³

The ideas that man can change, that he must be able to uproot factors which inhibit his development and that he is the tool of his own liberation and progress, are factors which are part of TSD and its conscientization process. The fact that TSD has worked basically within the framework of the dominant national ideology can explain why its activities have not been interfered with by authorities. How long this will continue, only time will tell. For, in spite of sharing an ideological framework, the practitioners of TSD are posing a challenge to the politicians. This is primarily through the process of demystification of social reality which identifies the politicians as part of the people's problems and a component of 'the enemy'. By using a socialist perspective, the process is also underlining the validity of the national ideology but at the same time making a distinction between the ideological principles and those who profess to adhere to them. It is a challenge which might prove to be too much for the politicians if examples from other countries are anything to go by.⁴⁴ But activists in popular theatre are optimistic about the theatre movement. Penina Muhando, for example, has said quite emphatically, 'I see popular theatre being the main theatre movement in the future'.⁴⁵

4. Censorship and Theatre Control

Any society has a form of censorship which operates directly or indirectly on such public activities as theatre. In most cases, the state or government find it necessary to institutionalize censorship in

forms of decrees or bodies which oversee censorship. The existence of official censorship is sometimes supplemented with or replaced by a public taste which dictates what should or should not be seen on the stage. Directly or indirectly, however, censorship always works from a point of negation, a frame of reference which wants to exclude elements. It preoccupies itself with excluding those elements which its sponsors see as detrimental to social, political or economic interaction. Because of theatre's potency to mold, influence or provide sources of imitation - propaganda - censorship has always been part of its development. The form and content of censorship is informed by the political and social framework as well as the aspirations of those who enforce it. Part of the social framework is the conception and practice of 'expression' within and outside theatre or the role of the commonly referred to 'freedom of speech'. In Tanzania the question of theatre censorship is as ambiguous as that of 'freedom of speech'.

Nyerere has posited the issue of freedom of expression between two principles of 'individual freedom and community responsibility'.⁴⁶ This translates in general terms as individual freedom but always in reference to 'how does this affect the progress of our Development Plan':⁴⁷

Freedom of speech, freedom of movement and association, are valuable things which we want to secure for all our people. But at the same time we must secure urgently, freedom from hunger, and from ignorance and disease for everyone. Can we allow the abuse of one freedom to sabotage our national search for another freedom?⁴⁸

The trick is then to always make sure that the two freedoms complement each other. For Nyerere, this complementarity does not exclude

critical assessment. 'We can and we must, individually and as a group, learn from the mistakes we make and also do our best to learn from others'.⁴⁹ Underlying Nyerere's two principles, however, are two factors which need to be underscored. First of all that community responsibility ultimately dictates whether freedoms have been abused. The emphasis on the question 'how does this affect our development plan' makes self expression the servant of community interests. Secondly and probably the most important of the two is who defines community interests - the leadership or the people themselves. In a country like Tanzania there is an assumption especially from the leadership that official interpretations of need complement the people's. What happens then when individual expression speaks for the people's needs which stand in opposition to those interpreted by the leadership? To a certain extent, instead of being paralysed by some of these dilemmas and conflicts those who have wanted to express themselves have consciously or unconsciously taken advantage of the situation. Because freedom of expression and community responsibility are relative in their widest sense, means to justify their complementarity at each instance become not difficult to find. By the same token, however, others have pointed out the commitment of a writer or any creative person leaves him little room to be free. Walter Bgoya, the General Manager of Tanzania Publishing House, is one of those who sees freedom of expression as an idea not relevant to a writer, amongst others:

I think that a writer has no freedom of any kind. To me, a writer is a product of a particular society. Each society

sets out its own parameters which an individual cannot violate. And so, in every case, the writer is hemmed in by these parameters which he cannot cross.⁵⁰

Bgoya concedes that a writer or individual can challenge the parameters set by society but the violation is usually checked by specific boundaries set up by the ruling class in that society which has set up structures to ensure particular ideologies.⁵¹ In spite of the fact that Bgoya starts his argument from a different premise from Nyerere's, it underlines the same final effect on those who write or produce creative works. It is a matter of looking at the circumstances as creating within limitations or that freedom is relative. In the Tanzanian case, the limitations provided by society in general and the ruling class in particular have been ambiguous enough to allow a sense of relative freedom to prevail. The fact that no theatre work has been overtly censored or banned in Tanzania points to this relative freedom. This, however, has to be understood alongside two other factors in the Tanzanian experience. Compared to other African nations, Tanzania has enjoyed a comparatively stable political atmosphere. The ruling group has been consistently the same since independence and after 1967. This fact has given the leadership a chance to implement policies without the worries that come with an unstable situation. The initial political and economic ambitions shared by the people and their leaders to a certain extent have created a sense of security on the part of the leadership. Criticism on such a situation can be absorbed either consciously or unconsciously. The other factor concerns the theatre practitioners' commitment to the events in

Tanzania. Those who voice criticism of the political or socio-economic reality claim a commitment within the vision of a socialist transformation - a transformation in which self criticism has been underlined as part of the process. There has also been another form of safety-valve. The critical works produced especially in the latter part of Arusha, have taken forms which have become, in a way, general and outward looking rather than enclosed within the specificity of the Tanzanian experience. It has been easy, for example, for those who might feel uneasy about official criticism to accept a play like Ayubu and say it speaks to and for all exploited and oppressed nations especially of the Third World. Tanzania's reality used in the play becomes an example rather than the exception in that case. Juan Radrigan has described a similar experience in the shanty towns of Chile where a political situation has necessitated the employment of particular approaches:

To survive, writers have developed a kind of self-censorship which means that their message is there to be understood if the public knows what to look for, but is never overtly expressed. The author situates his work not on the level of everyday reality, but couches it in the most general terms possible. It is left to the audience to work back from this universal level to a discovery of the relevance of the works to the reality surrounding them.⁵²

Of course the reality in Tanzania is different from Chile but the critical works in Tanzania have tried to retreat to the same type of generality which needs translation on the part of the audience. This has provided theatre practitioners with more potent theatrical ways of being critical while at the same time finding safety from political repercussions from the open nature of their work. The case of the

play, Kaputula La Marx (The Shorts of Marx) by E. Kezilahabi⁵³ provides some insights in the way restraint is exercised in handling critical plays. The play was written in the late seventies but it has neither been performed nor published. This has nothing to do with any lack of theatrical merit or thematic relevance of the play. Its use of symbols and metaphors has thinly veiled its finger pointing at certain aspects of Tanzania's political reality - a fact which has no doubt frightened producers and publishers. While plays such as Ayubu and Lina Ubani contain within them similar attacks, Kaputula La Marx is too direct and too specific especially in terms of identifying individuals.⁵⁴

The government in Tanzania has not been totally negligent on the question of theatre censorship, however. The Ministry responsible for Culture has from time to time issues directives which although never vigorously implemented outline some official concern on what is not suitable on the stage. In one such directive the Ministry underscored its stand to stamp out and forbid performances which corrupt values and encourage anti-social behaviour:

It is clearly understood that the guidelines for Tanzania emphasize national integrity and respect. Therefore, the nation forbids all acts which are hooliganistic in nature and corrupt values for the good upbringing of children.⁵⁵

Some of the actions mentioned as not suitable for the stage are nakedness on stage, vigorous hip movements without cause and fornication. While admitting that these have been very much part of traditional performances, the Ministry sees that their perpetuation is unbecoming today's Tanzanian society!

The Ministry is now trying to fight against decadent and false culture. Decadence shows itself in theatre when no development changes are allowed in but the same old ways are followed even though these have become obsolete.⁵⁶

The Ministry here was obviously concentrating on those parts of traditional performances which have been uplifted from their social context and performed outside their social function. The directive would definitely not touch those performances still carried on where such elements as nakedness, hip movements and even simulations of coition are part of initiation ceremonies. But even on the stages away from the ceremonies, it becomes difficult to draw the line on what is proper or improper, for example, in the hip movements done. In certain areas like the Southern part of Tanzania, virtuosity in dance includes the ability to move one's hips vigorously and some dances rely their entire choreography on such movements. Such dances as Chindimba have become national favourites because of their vigorous hip movements. Even other dances such as Lizombe which traditionally concentrated more on feet rhythms have incorporated more hip movements in their choreography. In such a situation, the directives like the one above become non starters.

In 1976, however, the Ministry followed up its various statements on censorship by devising what has come to be known as the Laws Governing Films and Theatre.⁵⁷ The laws governing theatre were pretty general and did not specify which activities were permitted or not permitted on the nation's stages. They rather empowered the government through its organs and officials to censor the activities as they

saw fit at each instance. The section of the law which deals with theatre has as its major items the granting of licences for theatre plays and the power of the authorities in granting and withdrawing of licences. (See Appendix J.) Except in a few cases, theatre performances have been held since the laws were instituted in 1976 without licences. In the few known cases, a licence has been requested as a political insurance policy rather than as a legal necessity. Paukwa Theatre Group, for example, has been theatrically active since 1976. It was only with the production of Lina Ubani, however, that the group invited the Censorship Board to view and grant a licence. One member of the group explained how this came about:

After performing at the Campus [University of Dar-es-Salaam] twice, we thought we should also perform in town since that was our tradition. Due to the sensitivity of the play, however, we thought we ought to cover ourselves against any eventuality. So we asked the Board for clearance. ... so they came and saw the play with the audience. After thirty minutes of deliberation they gave us their verdict that we could go ahead and perform anywhere for at least 4 years.⁵⁸

With few people bothering about licences, the law has constantly been violated and yet no one has so far been arrested or prosecuted for breaking it. Theatre practitioners have taken advantage of the official laxity and weakness in implementing the law.

In spite of the lack of follow through in these laws governing theatre performances, control has been effected in other ways. Radio Tanzania, for example, follows a rigorous censorship of its theatre output on ideological and moral premises. The plays aired must contain the correct ideological position as well as exclude 'unacceptable' activities. RTD is sensitive to the fact that it

cannot select its listeners. Everybody is a potential listener. This makes RTD censor anything that might have diverse effects on any part of the population. Such items as adultery and armed robbery are censored. Only the mildest form of profanity is allowed. More important for RTD is that the values and attitudes in the radio plays do, in the last instance, support the official ideological concern of building Ujamaa in Tanzania.⁵⁹

Censorship and theatre control has been much more effective away from the urban centres, in the villages and communities. This control is not linked to the theatre laws of 1976 but has arisen as part of general control on social and economic activities on the local levels. In the regions, districts and villages, there are usually special committees responsible for festivals and celebrations. Activities to be performed on national holidays, visitations by political leadership or any political event are under the jurisdiction of such committees. Before performances are shown to the general public the committees act as censors to the activities and give general directives as to what is desirable or undesirable to be shown. There are no specific aesthetic or political guidelines which the committees follow but they depend on their own experience and the general political expectations of the censors or what might please the politicians attending. What is permissible on one occasion, therefore, can be totally banned on another.

Local authorities have also established by-laws in which licences are required to hold social functions of a public nature. These

govern such activities as weddings, initiations and other celebrations. The licensing authority, however, does not concern itself with the content of such activities and there is therefore no censorship exercised. The demands for a licence provides the authorities to know what is going on in the area. The permits allow the holder to brew or serve intoxicating drinks and provide him with security if any breach of the peace occurs during the festivities. The need for a licence, however, has never in any way inhibited or stopped performances since its acquisition is relatively easy on the local levels. A more effective method of control has been the issuing of guidelines to ensure that performances do not conflict with economic production or important educational or political objectives. The areas covered by these guidelines range from regional to village and take their characteristics from the social and economic conditions in the area. In Morogoro Region, for example, all performances are banned during cultivation time except at very unusual events in which special licences are required. The traditional performances which were common in the evenings after a day's work are also not allowed. Sometimes, performances are affected as a result of guidelines for other activities. In April 1984, for example, the authorities in Dodoma Region outlawed the brewing of all traditional brews because they saw the activity as draining the scarce food resources in the region. Drinking is a major part of traditional performances and so outlawing brewing means curtailing the ceremonies and performances where drinking is part of the social act. In Lindi Region, the

authorities allow initiation ceremonies for students to take place only at the mid-year school holidays. Some officials have gone out of their way to discourage certain traditional performances like initiations of girls.⁶⁰

While in most places visited, the people adhered to the guidelines and official persuasion, complaints and dissatisfaction have been voiced. The official time-tables for performances, for example, are not always convenient for the people concerned. In the case of Lindi, parents complained that the mid-year school holidays are too short for the initiation ceremonies. Moreover, they are forced to hold them before they have finished all their harvesting which means they are socially and economically not prepared. A form of resistance to the official guideline has developed in which some parents don't enrol their children in school until after they have gone through their initiation.⁶¹ In places where certain activities have been discouraged, the community is usually divided between traditional and contemporary needs. The villagers in Mtego wa Simba, Morogoro Region, were quite divided on the issue of continuing or stopping initiation performances for girls. Some members led by the village chairman thought the practice should cease primarily because it no longer fulfilled a necessary function in the community and is an economic burden on the parents. The others, however, saw initiation as more needed at present than before. They saw initiation as filling in the gaps which contemporary education leaves especially in the areas of moral values. The most important reason for continuing the practice of initiation was provided by the women who

still saw it as a major force in their lives. They pointed out that traditional structures were still prevalent in especially rural communities. Initiation gives the women a sense of belonging to the community. Still prevalent in many areas is the exclusion of women who have not been initiated from activities and functions of adult women. Women fear, therefore, that they will be ostracised and become outcasts in their own communities if they do not participate in the ceremonies.

The economic rationale given behind the curtailment of performances at the local level leaves its effect on production questionable. There seems to be no hard evidence that performances have affected economic production adversely and therefore their control will make the peasant produce more. There is more evidence that, traditionally, the peasant regulated his performances so that they were in tune with his economic production. Granted that some control is necessary at present, the most efficient approach would be to give the peasant a say in the forms of control and what times are more relevant to his needs. As it is, there is a danger of not only curtailing his creativity but making theatre activities inconsequential and peripheral to his life.

The general feeling about censorship was exemplified in the attitudes shown by 107 interviewees when they were asked two questions on censorship. On whether there was censorship in the country, 26 of them said yes, 15 said no and 66 said they did not know. The majority, therefore, did not know whether there were actual laws on censorship or

not. For those who thought that there was official censorship, their claim was based not on the knowledge of any existing laws but on the official insistence that performances must adhere to party and state ideological perspective as well as in the response of the performances to that insistence. While most of the interviewees did not know or were not sure about censorship laws, there was an overwhelming consensus on the need for censorship in theatre. The reasons given for this need were both political and moral. Politically, censorship was seen as a good way to make sure that theatre practice stays in line with national policies and aspirations. Theatre's ability to corrupt morals was given as another reason for censorship. It was pointed out that such rituals or performances as Unyago, Mkole, Digubi, etc., were inappropriate for a mixed public audience especially because nudity, sexuality and forms of profanity were part of these activities.⁶² These attitudes, however, overlook the fact that the existence and rigorous implementation of censorship will not necessarily put theatre politically and morally in line. Film provides a good example. Unlike the theatre, films have been put through official scrutiny since 1976 in the hands of the Film Censorship Board. The Board was invested with the power to censor all films or elements in films which were not in line with Tanzania's political and social objectives. One wonders then what the Kung Fu, cheap Indian and B American films are doing on the nation's film houses. When censorship is exercised within films it is usually done crudely without aesthetic and social considerations of the elements eliminated. This of course is typical

of a board which is comprised of bureaucrats and social opportunists who understand little of the medium of film communication. An established body to handle theatre censorship might fall in the same lines of ineffectiveness.

* * *

This thesis has tried to examine the nature of theatre practice and the factors surrounding theatre production after 1967. What emerges from the preceding discussions is theatre which has been informed by historical, aesthetic and political factors as well as being in tune with contemporary social reality, values and attitudes engendered by the Arusha Declaration and the subsequent political events. In its various forms and manifestations, the theatre has been consciously used as a political forum and propaganda with varying intentions. The issues and their manner of portrayal in the stage plays, Ngonjera, dance-drama, radio plays and in popular theatre for development show a preoccupation with the economic and political liberation of man and his society. Most often, Socialism is shown to be the most viable option for social existence which will lead to total liberation. Some of Tanzania's contemporary problems are portrayed as the result of a failure to institute workable socialist structures in accordance with the intentions of the Arusha Declaration. Theatre production has also, however, been informed by official material, moral and ideological support. While the State and the Party have declared intentions and the way they want theatre to

develop, most often these have been contradicted by official practice and commitment to realize the intentions. As a consequence, theatre practice has not only expressed, responded to and reflected the immediate reality but it has also been a product of the limitations imposed upon it by official investment and commitment in the art form.

The period between 1967 and 1984 has produced events, values and attitudes which the theatre has claimed and identified with. The period has been dominated by the word 'Ujamaa' and the leadership of President Nyerere. As these final words to this thesis are being put down, Nyerere has stepped down and for the first time since independence, Tanzania will have a different man to lead the country. Changes can be expected to occur even though Nyerere's position as Chairman of the Party will ensure continuity of the major policies, especially Ujamaa. The theatre can be expected to respond to any changes or events in the future. Its dynamism, however, will depend on, on the one hand, the adjustments of theatre aesthetics to the social reality and the functions assigned to it, and, on the other, the minimization of the obstacles and limitations affecting theatre production and its development. The period covered in this thesis has laid the foundation for the future as well as exposed the tasks ahead for the theatre.

Notes to Chapter 6

- 1 On how some of the ideas have developed especially amongst social scientists, see amongst others Peter Worsley, The Three Worlds: Culture and World Development, London, 1984, pp.1-60; James Cockfort et al., Dependence and Underdevelopment, Garden City, 1972; David Lehman, ed., Development Theory, London, 1979.
- 2 See amongst others Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, Dar-es-Salaam, 1972.
- 3 See André Gunder Frank, 'Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment' in Cockfort et al., op.cit.
- 4 See note 2.
- 5 Walter Rodney, op.cit., p.9.
- 6 Ibid., p.10.
- 7 André Gunder Frank, op.cit., p.394.
- 8 E. Chambulikazi et al., 'Theatre for Social Development (TSD)', University of Dar-es-Salaam, 1982 (unpublished).
- 9 Ross Kidd and Nat Colletts, eds., Tradition for Development, Berlin, 1980, p.17.
- 10 United Nations agencies for example became quite active in supporting folk-media. See UNESCO, Folk Media and Mass Media in Population Communication, Vol.8, Paris, 1982.
- 11 See Paolo Freire, Cultural Action for Freedom, Cambridge, 1970, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, New York, 1970, Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea Bissau, New York, 1978.
- 12 See Cultural Action for Freedom.
- 13 See Pedagogy of the Oppressed, pp.29-35.
- 14 See note 33.

- 15 Bertolt Brecht, 'Against Georg Lucacs' in Aesthetics and Politics. London, 1980, p.81.
- 16 See A. Green, 'Popular Drama and the Mummers' Play', in David Bradby et al., Performance and Politics in Popular Drama, Cambridge, 1981, pp.139-141.
- 17 Stuart Hall in Bradby et al., p.227.
- 18 For further discussion on the relationship of cultural production and mass culture see A.S. Vasquez, Art and Society, London, 1965.
- 19 F.H.K. Mudenda in Workshop Report, Chalimbana, Zambia, 1979, p.4.
- 20 A.T. Culwick and G.M. Culwick, 'Social Propaganda in Illiterate Africa' in Oversea Education, Vol.IX, No.3, p.112. See also Mary Kelly 'A Conference in African Drama' in Oversea Education, Vol.IX, no.1, 1937; W.H. Taylor, 'Observation on the Talent of Africans' in Oversea Education, Vol.V, No.1, 1933; and Chapter 1 of this study discusses in more detail theatre and colonialism.
- 21 Christopher F. Kamlongera in Theatre Research International, Vol.VII, 1982 , p.209.
- 22 Bob Leshoai, 'Theatre and the Common Man', Transition, Vol.4, No.19, 1968, p.46.
- 23 Ibid., p.44.
- 24 Bob Leshoai, 'Tanzania - Socialist Theatre', in New Theatre Magazine: Third World Theatre, Vol.XII, No.2, p.23.
- 25 See Michael Etherton, 'Zambia, Popular Theatre' in New Theatre Magazine, Vol.XII, No.2, pp.19-21; The Development of African Drama, London, 1982, pp.326-341; David Cook, 'Theatre Goes to the People' in Transition, Vol.5(vi), No.25, 2, 1966, pp.23-33; Bob Leshoai in Transition, op.cit.
- 26 For a list of plays produced at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, see Appendix H.
- 27 This is from an unpublished report on Kasama Theatre Workshop, August 1969, distributed by Extra-Mural Department, Kasama, Zambia.

- 28 This was during a tour of Hussein's Mashetani in 1977 in which this writer participated.
- 29 Jipemoyo has been documented in amongst others Jipemoyo: Development and Culture Research, edited by Marja-Liisa Swantz and Helena Jerman, Helsinki, 1977, Jipemoyo No.2, edited by A.O. Anacleto, Uppsala, 1980; Jipemoyo No.3, edited by Philip Donner, Motala, 1981; Ulla Vuorela, 'Towards the Creation of Traditions' Archive and a Documentation Centre Within the Ministry of National Culture and Youth; Jipemoyo Project, Final Report, Dar-es-Salaam, 1979.
- 30 Marja-Liisa Swantz, 'Suggestions for an Approach to Culture Study in Cooperation between Researchers from Finland and Tanzania', June 1974 (typescript).
- 31 Ulla Vuorela, op.cit., p.36.
- 32 The workshop was entitled 'African Regional Workshop on Participatory Research' held at Mzumbe Morogoro, July 1-7, 1979.
- 33 Between 1977 and 1979, Tanzanian theatre practitioners actively participated in popular theatre workshops in Zambia, Lesotho and Botswana before the first TSD project was inaugurated in Malya in 1982. For Popular Theatre in the Eastern and Southern African Region see amongst others Christopher Kamlongera, 1982, op.cit., Stephen Chifunise et al., Workshop Report, Chalimbana Zambia 1979; Laedza Batanani Institute of Adult Education, Gabarone, 1978; Martin Byram and Ross Kidd, 'Laedza Batanani: Popular Theatre and Development - a Botswana case study', Convergence, Vol.10, No.2, October 1977; Ross Kidd, 'Popular Theatre and Popular Struggle in Kenya: the story of Kamiriithu', Race and Class, Vol.xxiv, London, 1983, pp.287-304. On popular activities elsewhere see amongst others Ross Kidd and Nat Colletta, 1980, op.cit.
- 34 I owe this and all the following information on popular theatre in Malya and Bagamoyo to the team's report, i.e., E. Chambulikazi, P.O. Mlama and A. Lihamba as well as to information collected during the research period for this work. For TSD performances see Figures 33-36.
- 35 See Map 1.
- 36 From the team's report, see note 34.

- 37 There were 50 people in the village core group but many more villagers attended each meeting.
- 38 From team's report. See Figures 33 & 34.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 John Iliffe, A Modern History of Tanganyika, Cambridge, 1979, p.129. See also p.45, pp.135-7.
- 41 Brian Crow and Michael Etherton, 'Popular Drama and Popular Analysis', in Kidd and Colletta, 1980, p.585.
- 42 Julius K. Nyerere, Azimio la Arusha Baada ya Miaka Kumi, Dar-es-Salaam, 1977, p.34. (My translation.)
- 43 Julius K. Nyerere, Education Must Liberate Man, Dar-es-Salaam, 1974, p.5. These ideas have been repeated in the various speeches contained in Freedom and Socialism, Freedom and Development, Freedom and Unity, all quoted in Chapter 2.
- 44 The fate of Kamiriithu in Kenya and popular theatre in Chile has been reported respectively by Ross Kidd, 1983, op.cit., and Juan Radrigan, 'Shanty-Town Theatre', in Index on Censorship, Vol.14, No.1, February 1985.
- 45 Interview with Penina O. Muhando, see Appendix I.
- 46 See Nyerere, Freedom and Unity, p.315.
- 47 Ibid., p.314.
- 48 Ibid., p.312.
- 49 Ibid., p.310.
- 50 Walter Bgoya, 'Uhuru wa Mwandishi', Zinduko, Dar-es-Salaam, August 16th, 1974, p.18. (My translation.)
- 51 Ibid., p.22.
- 52 Juan Radrigan, 'Shanty-Town Theatre', Index on Censorship, Vol.14, No.1, February 1985, p.9.
- 53 See Chapter 4 Section 6.
- 54 Ibid.

- 55 From a Ministry memorandum circulated in 1976, and I owe this to A. Mandanda, Head, Department of Theatre Arts, The Prime Minister's Office. (My translation.)
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 See Appendix J.
- 58 From M.M. Chikawe, a member of Paukwa, Dar-es-Salaam, April 4, 1985. For Paukwa performances see Figures 10,12,14, 19&20.
- 59 See Radio Plays in Chapter 5.
- 60 From research interviews and information from villages and towns in Dodoma, Coast, Mwanza, Tanga, Lindi and Morogoro Regions.
- 61 The practice was quite common in Nachingwea rural especially amongst those who live far from local administrative centres.
- 62 From a questionnaire to 107 theatre practitioners, teachers, cultural officers and theatre students.

APPENDIX A

Ngonjera: Representative Samples, 1967-1984

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author/source</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>Usi we Kupe Jitegemee</u>	Ukuta/RTD*	Economic Self-reliance	1968
<u>Utukufu wa Taifa</u>	Chipukizi Mtwara	On Nationalism	1970
<u>Ngonjera za Ukuta 1 & 2</u>	M. Mnyampala	The Arusha Declaration and national culture	1971
<u>Dakika 15 za Uzalendo</u>	E. Kezilahabi	The Arusha Declaration	1971
<u>Tuhamie Vijijini</u>	RTD	Move to new villages	1972
<u>Mapinduzi ya Unguja</u>	RTD	On Zanzibar Revolution	1973
<u>Wasio na Kazi Mijini</u>	RTD	On the urban unemployed	1973
<u>Jukumu la Vijana katika Nchi ya kijamaa</u>	RTD	On the responsibility of youth in a socialist country	1973
<u>Umoja ni Nguvu</u>	M. Muhando	Need of unity to offset worker oppression	1973
<u>Madhumuni ya Ujamaa</u>	RTD	The precepts of socialism	1973
<u>Matendo ya Sheikh Karume</u>	RTD	The Deeds of the First President of Zanzibar	1973
<u>Mtu ni Afya</u>	RTD	On health	1973
<u>Adui Wetu Ujinga</u>	RTD	Need for literacy	1973
<u>Ukombozi</u>	RTD	On liberation	1973

* RTD - Radio Tanzania Dar-es-Salaam. In many cases RTD does not credit the authors or the performers. Some of the Ngonjera are unpublished, for those published see Chapter 4 part 4.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author/source</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>Vijiji vya Ujamaa</u>	Mbunda & Co.	On Ujamaa living	1974
<u>TANU Imetenda Kazi</u>	S. Mkamba	The accomplishments of TANU	1974
<u>Mke Wangu Twende Shamba</u>	RTD	On Village living	1975
<u>Kilimo cha Kufa na Kupona</u>	RTD	On agricultural activities	1975
<u>Kuondoa Ukupe</u>	RTD	Eradication of exploitative practices	1975
<u>Mwongozo wa TANU</u>	RTD	On the Party guidelines	1975
<u>Azimio la Arusha</u>	M.K. Mwenambovu	On the successes of the Arusha Declaration	1976
<u>Ngonjera</u>	D.P.B. Massamba	On social relations between a man and a woman	1976
<u>Harakati za Siasa Tanzania</u>	RTD	Tanzania's political history	1977-78
<u>Kukata Mirija</u>	Chipukizi Mtwara	On eradication of exploitation	1977
<u>Kusheherekea Kuzaliwa kwa CCM</u>	RTD	On celebrating the new Party CCM	1978
<u>Historia ya CCM</u>	RTD	The history of CCM	1978
<u>Mapinduzi</u>	RTD	On liberation	1978
<u>Uvamizi wa Iddi Amin</u>	RTD	On Iddi Amin's Invasion of Tanzania	1978
<u>Wafanyi Kazi Watashinda</u>	RTD	Workers triumph against exploitation	1979
<u>Tutavuna Tulichopanda</u>	RTD	On socialist ideals	1980
<u>Mapambano</u>	RTD	Economic and political struggles	1982

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author/source</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>Nguvu Kazi</u>	RTD	On productive labour on the land	1983
<u>Binadamu Haridhiki</u>	RTD	Fight against individualism	1984
<u>Nguvu Kazi</u>	Western Region*	On every man should work	1984
<u>Nipe Habari</u>	DDC Kibisa/ RTD*	On work ethics, economic situation and political leadership	1984
<u>Tukomeshe Ulanguzi</u>	Eastern Region*	On Racketeering and need to end it	1984
<u>Hali Halisi y Uchumi</u>	Kilimanjaro Region*	The economic situation in the country	1984
<u>Tanzania ya Leo</u>	Morogoro Region*	Today's Tanzania	1984

* These were Ngonjeras entered in the zonal and national cultural competitions (see Chapter 5).

APPENDIX B

A Summary of 10 Vichekesho Scenarios
performed after the Arusha Declaration*

1. The Radio (A morality play - cheaters will be caught)

A wife has a succession of lovers who one day all turn up at the same time. When the husband returns unexpectedly, the wife uses her wits to conceal the lovers in a variety of places and forms. For example, she conceals one in a water drum, asks another to be a statue and another a radio. This is a popular scenario dating from the pre-Arusha period and has variations when performed by different groups.

2. Adui Mjinga (Illiteracy is the Enemy) 1975

An illiterate father is deceived by his daughter who claims that a letter she has received from a lover is a school report. Since everyone around can read and knows the facts, the father becomes the laughing stock of the community. When he cannot stand the humiliation any further, he enrolls in a literacy class. This scenario also has many variations including one in which a letter is misinterpreted as divorce

* The plot scenarios are those which are in the repertoires of DDC Kibisa, Muungano, Baragumu and Tanganyika Textiles Cultural Groups.

papers (see Chapter 5 for a similar plot). This scenario was part of the national campaign for literacy and encouraged people to read and write.

3. Chakula Bora (Food for Health) 1975

This scenario was initially part of the campaign for good health. A pregnant woman is forbidden by her husband to eat such items as meat, eggs, beans, etc. The woman becomes sick and the husband consults a Mganga who charges an exorbitant fee and gives diagnosis of spirit possession. The woman dies during child birth and the husband returns to the Mganga for further explanation of the events. When he is told that his wife had a lover who is responsible for her death, the husband kills the lover and is subsequently apprehended and jailed. The play tries to attack unprogressive traditional attitudes.

4. Ulanguzi (Racketeering) 1980

A man finds ways of making money and profit quickly through shady activities. He is apprehended one day when he boasts about his activities to a group of people who include the law. This scenario has many variations including one entitled Majambazi (Robbers) which one group developed into a kind of serial of four different Vichekesho. Instead of one man, the plot follows the activities of a team of either a gang or a family. These scenarios have been developed to support the government's campaign against thieves, racketeers and

exploiters. They are all usually caught and punished in the plays.

5. Yatima (The Orphan) 1978

A girl who leaves her village for the bright lights of the city gets pregnant by a 'town dweller'. The man leaves her and she is forced to dump the child in a dustbin after it is born. An old couple find the child, bring him up and in the end he becomes a successful manager of a corporation. His mother in the meantime has become poor and a cripple. The manager finds her in the streets one day, brings her home and after a while they discover their relationship. This also has many variations including the play Kosa la Nani discussed in Chapter 5. The play aims at promoting good moral behaviour and responsibility as well as exposing corruption of urban life to encourage people to stay in villages.

6. Kuku na Mayai (The Chicken and the Eggs) 1981

A man divorces his wife and soon after leaves town. He remarries in his new town and after a long stay there returns to his old town where he discovers that his new wife and the old one are mother and daughter. Variations of this scenario include the two women are sisters, or the mother marries a son or a brother marries a sister. 'Look before you leap' is the moral.

7. Maneja Mhujumu (The Corrupt Manager) 1983

A manager of a corporation uses public funds recklessly and for his own personal interests. When he is found out he commits suicide. Variations of this scenario include a manager who has a love affair with his secretary or a politician who is corrupt. These scenarios are in support of the campaign against corrupt leaders and official irresponsibility propagated especially since 1980. It also has a moral, 'Crime does not pay'.

8. Misitu ni Mali (Forests are a Treasure) 1983

In response to the government's call to protect forests people have stopped cutting trees except one old man. He continues his charcoal business until the forest around him is depleted of trees. As a consequence, rain stops coming and famine visits the old man. After persuasion from his brother who saves him by bringing food and advice on the value of trees, the old man is convinced. He stops cutting trees and plants some more instead. This scenario was a direct response to afforestation especially after a big fire claimed a large portion of the Mufindi area in 1983. The stubborn old man who refuses to conform is also found in Vichesho dealing with Ujamaa living. A popular scenario is of an old man who refuses to move together with others for economic reasons. His individuality does not pay and he is only saved when he sees the advantages of communal living. Variations of this include the use of a young man in town who

refuses to move to the villages and work or a young woman who moves from village to the town and is forced to move back to the village again. These scenarios have been performed variously since 1967.

9. Namtaka Mume Afisa (I want a Husband who is an Official) 1983

An ambitious girl turns down many suitors because she aims to marry a man with a position. A cleaner pretending to be a worker in an office turns up one day and the girl agrees to marry him. The pretence is unmasked when the wife finds the husband sweeping at the market place and a fight ensues. A variation of this includes an unemployed husband who pretends to have a good job or a Muslim man pretending to be devout during the month of Ramadhan. They all deal with pretensions and unmasking as well as condemning greed.

10. Benki (The Bank) 1984

During an unsuccessful robbery, two men kill an old man but the old man's daughter and her husband escape. The two robbers then kidnap the girl in an attempt to find out where the family money is. They become angry when they find out that the money is in the bank and continue to harass the girl. The husband tries to rescue his wife by masquerading as a woman and the two robbers are apprehended when one of them picks up the husband for his night's entertainment.

APPENDIX COrganized Theatre Groups Active in Dar-es-Salaam by June 1984

Founded before 1967:

Utamaduni Urafiki*
Tanganyika Textiles Drama Club

Founded after 1967:

Furaha Dancing Troupe
Utamaduni Reli*
Katapila Dancing Group*
Utamaduni Jitegemee
Utamaduni Maji*
Utamaduni Mapinduzi
Ida Nole Dancing Troupe
Super Fanaka Cultural Group
Bora Cultural Group*
DDC, Kibisa Cultural Group*
Afrika Ngoma
National Milling Corporation*
Masoko Ngoma Group*
Utamaduni Nyumba*
Super Ukombozi Dancing Group
Sunguratex Utamaduni Group*
Kiltex Cultural Group
Baragumu Cultural Group
Bantu International Group
Paukwa Theatre Group
Sayari Cultural Group
JKT Mgulani, Utamaduni Group*
Agizo (Utamaduni)*
JWTZ Cultural Group*
Zinji Cultural Group
Muungano Dancing Group

* Groups within parastatals or military institutions. The above groups exclude groups which are specifically taarab, or ngoma groups.

APPENDIX D

A summary of the 20 year Plan for Cultural Development, with specific reference to Theatre.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Activities</u>
1981-1985:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To prepare tutors for theatre arts for the Regions and Districts so that by 1985 each Region will have one tutor. - The expansion of the College of Arts to meet the above objective. - To prepare theatre animateurs at the University of Dar-es-Salaam so that by 1985 each Region will have one. - To build an Open Air Theatre in Dodoma. - To build a Theatre Hall in Dar-es-Salaam. - To build Regional Theatres. - To start a Travelling Theatre.
1986-1990:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consolidate the preparation of theatre tutors so that by 1990 each district will have one. - To consolidate the training of theatre animateurs so that by 1990 each district will have one.

PeriodActivities

- To start Regional professional companies.
 - To start and run a costume shop.
 - To build a National Theatre in Dodoma.
- 1991-1995:
- To start Regional Cultural shops.
 - To build District theatres.
- 1996-2000:
- To start District professional companies.
 - To build a National Opera House.
- Throughout the period:
- The printing of books from writing competitions.
 - Yearly Cultural competitions and participation in Cultural festivals outside.

Source: Mipango ya Miaka 20, 1981-2000. Directorate of Arts and National Language, The Ministry of Information and Culture, Dar-es-Salaam, 1981 (unpublished, my translation).

APPENDIX E

A summary of the six plays entered for the National Cultural competitions in Dar-es-Salaam in September 1984.

Adui Ujinga (Ignorance is an Enemy) by Eastern Zone. The plot is similar to that summarized in Appendix B, no.2.

Tutashinda na Ukombozi wa Mwafrika (We Shall Win and The Liberation of the African) by the Lake and Northern Zones respectively. Both these plays show the liberation struggles in South Africa and call for support of those who are fighting the racist regime there. In Tutashinda, South African black men are shown to be harrassed and oppressed by the whites. In the first scene, one Mahlangu Biko seeks refuge with an old woman and her granddaughter. He is pursued by police, caught and taken away but not before the police have brutalized Biko and his hosts. The rest of the play is a flashback which shows events affecting Biko and lead to what happens in the first scene. After working for a white South African couple, Biko is sent to work in the mines after a small accident in the couple's house. The move is initiated by the couple to teach Biko a lesson. In the mines, Biko meets other suffering blacks and, one day when their oppressors push them too far, they stage a spontaneous rebellion.

Ukombozi wa Mwafrika is about the liberation struggles of the African National Congress of South Africa. Two ANC fighters are caught during a battle against the South African army and are sent to a notorious jail. There, they are tortured by both the white jailors and their black lackeys. In the end, one of the ANC members dies and the play makes a passionate plea to support the liberation movements.

Ulanguzi (Racketeering) by the Southern Zone. The play is a domestic drama with a focus on personal problems brought about by social and economic difficulties. A worker's wife nags her husband because she cannot stand their poverty. She is encouraged in her behaviour by a friend who is a black marketeer. The couple quarrel and are reluctantly reconciled by an elders' council. The worker, however, thinks he can help matters if he cuts the links between his wife and her friend. He turns informer to the police who then manage to arrest the racketeer in the middle of a business transaction.

Mkuki wa Urithi (The Inherited Spear) by Southern Highland Zone.

Based on a traditional tale, the play shows what happens when a united group is blinded by individualism and lack of foresight. A spear is inherited by one of three brothers. This brother is not only a tyrant but becomes quite irrational when one of his brothers loses the spear. He demands the return of the spear at whatever cost to his brother. In spite of the dangers during the journey, the spear is finally found with the help of an old woman with magical powers. The

tables are turned when the spear owner's child swallows beads belonging to the brother who lost the spear. The child dies in the attempt to retrieve the beads and the brothers realize too late that unity and selflessness are required if they have to continue to live in harmony.

Mnyonge Hana Haki (The Poor Has No Rights) by the Western Zone. The play exposes the plight of the poor man confronted with oppressive and exploitative elements within society. Mzee Masumbuko and his family are poor peasants whose access to health facilities, the courts and consumer goods is most often blocked by corrupt individuals who only have the interests of their class at heart. Mzee Masumbuko is unable to get essential commodities at his local distribution centre because those in charge prefer relatives and friends. He is abused at the health clinic when he takes his son to be treated. He meets the same fate at his village shop and finds himself not only abused but beaten. He reports the incident to the police but when the case comes up in court the judge decides against him. Not only has the judge been bribed by Mzee Masumbuko's attacker, but the doctor has also falsified the evidence in favour of his friend.

APPENDIX FPlays Performed by the National Drama Troupe and the College of Arts:1975-1984

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Author</u>
1975:	1. <u>Exodus</u> -	Improvised by NDT
1976:	2. <u>Afande</u> -	Written by 2 NDT members
	3. <u>Mwenyekiti</u> (The Chairman) -	Improvised by NDT
1977:	4. <u>Kinjeketile</u> -	E.N. Hussein
	5. <u>Jiwe la Kwanza</u> (The First Stone)	Improvised by NDT
1978:	6. <u>Harakati za Ukombozi</u> (The Struggles for Liberation) -	In collaboration with other DSM Cultural Troupes and UDSM
	7. <u>Kila Mtu</u> (Everyman) -	Obatunde Ijimere
	8. <u>Tendehogo</u> -	E. Semzaba
	9. <u>Buriani</u> (Farewell) -	Improvised by NDT
1979:	10. <u>Harusi</u> (The Wedding) -	Improvised by NDT
	11. <u>Kichuguu</u> (The Anthill) -	Written by one NDT member
1980:	12. <u>Tunda</u> (The Fruit) -	Improvised by NDT
1981:	13. <u>The Challenge and the Gap</u> -	In collaboration with Friteatern
	14. <u>Chipukizi</u> (Young Pioneer) -	Improvised by BCA*

* BCA = Bagamoyo College of Arts

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Author</u>
	15. <u>Chaguo Langu</u> (My Choice) -	Improvised by BCA
1982:	16. <u>Tutakutana Ahera</u> (We Shall Meet In The Hereafter) -	Improvised by BCA
	17. <u>Mabatini</u> -	G.Z. Kaduma
1983:	18. <u>Kosa la Nani</u> (Who is To Blame) -	Improvised by BCA
	19. <u>Daktari</u> (The Doctor) -	Improvised by BCA
	20. <u>Hawala ya Fedha</u> (The Money Order) -	A. Lihamba
	21. <u>Heshima Yangu</u> (My Honour) -	P.O. Muhando
	22. <u>Huku na Kule Wataka</u> (You Want Here and There) -	Improvised by BCA
1984:	23. <u>Chakatu</u> -	Improvised by BCA

APPENDIX GA Representative Sample of Radio Theatre, 1967-1984

<u>Title of Performance</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>Makazi Mapya</u>	Drama	Ujamaa Living	1967
<u>Ukupe</u>	Drama	Exploitation within family members	1967-8
<u>Usiwe Kupe Jitegernee</u>	Drama	Self Reliance vs. Exploitation	1968
<u>Ponda wa Ofisi ya Dagaa</u>	Drama	Work ethics and social responsibility	1969
<u>Kijiji cha Urithi</u>	Drama	Ujamaa vs. traditional living	1972
<u>Cheo ni dhamana</u>	Ngonjera	Responsible Leadership	1972
<u>Rushwa</u>	Ngonjera	Social evils of Bribery	1972
<u>Tuhamie Vijijini</u>	Ngonjera	The need to move to Ujamaa Villages	1973
<u>Kusadikika (Robert)</u>	Drama	The Struggle against Oppression	1973
<u>Mahoka</u>	Drama	On various social and political evils	1974*
<u>Kufuta Ujinga</u>	Drama	The fight against Illiteracy	1975
<u>Umoja ni Nguvu (Muhando)</u>	Ngonjera	The need for Unity	1975 ⁺
<u>Mke Wangu Twende Shamba</u>	Ngonjera	The need to move to villages	1975 ⁺
<u>Dunia Hadaa</u>	Drama	Rural vs. Urban Values	1975-6

<u>Title of Performance</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Year</u>
<u>Vijiji vya Ujamaa</u>	Ngonjera	Life in Ujamaa Villages	1975 ⁺
<u>Uhai ni Kwao</u>	Drama	Rural vs. Urban Values	1976
<u>Wengi Wape</u>	Drama	Ujamaa living vs. Individualism	1978
<u>Pwagu na Pwaguzi</u>	Drama	On various economic activities which don't work	1978*
<u>Dhamana ya Hakimu</u>	Drama	Corruption vs. Justice	1978
<u>Madhambi ya Iddi Amin</u>	Ngonjera	The political and social sins of Iddi Amin	1978
<u>Mapambano ya Watanzania na Wakoloni</u>	Drama	The struggles of Tanzanians from Colonialism	1979
<u>Mazingara Safi</u>	Drama	On Clean Surroundings	1979
<u>Wafanyikazi Watashinda</u>	Drama	Workers struggle against exploitation	1979
<u>Mwaka wa Watoto</u>	Drama	The year of the children	1979
<u>Song of Lawino (pBitek)</u>	Poetic Drama	The need to reclaim traditional African values	1980
<u>Mkataa Pema Pabaya Panamwita</u>	Drama	Unrealistic social expectations and their effects	1981
<u>Mapambano</u>	Ngonjera	Struggles against oppression	1982
<u>Njama za Walanguzi</u>	Drama	On petty exploitations and racketeering	1983-4
<u>Nipe Habari</u>	Ngonjera	The need for every man to work	1984 ⁺

* These are still running by the end of 1984.

+ These have been discussed in Chapter 4.

APPENDIX H

Theatre Productions at the University of Dar-es-Salaam
and the Butimba College of Arts, 1967-1984

<u>Year</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>Author/Group</u>	<u>Type</u>
1967/68	<u>The Swamp Dwellers</u>	W. Soyinka/U	Drama
	<u>Dance Theatre</u>	U/U	Dance-drama
	<u>Variety Show</u>	U/U	Dance-drama
1968/69	<u>The Prodigal Son</u>	B. Leshoai/U	Drama
	<u>The Vulture</u>	Schwartz/U	Drama
	<u>The Trojan Women</u>	Euripides/U	Drama
	<u>The Bear</u>	A. Chekhov/U	Drama
	<u>Oganda's Journey</u>	G. Ogot/U	Drama
1969/70	<u>The Question</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama
	<u>The Canker</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama
	<u>The Scar</u>	R. Njau/U	Drama
	<u>Dance Creations</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama
	<u>Kinjeketile</u>	E.N. Hussein/U	Drama
	<u>The Death of Chaka</u>	S. Badian/U	Drama
1970/71	<u>Hatia</u>	P. Muhando/U	Drama
	<u>Daniel's Neighbour</u>	J.N. Birihanze/U	Drama
	<u>The Canker</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama

<u>Year</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>Author/Group</u>	<u>Type</u>
1971/72	<u>Mabepari wa Venisi</u>	W. Shakespeare/U	Drama
	<u>The Paris Commune</u>	B. Brecht/U	Drama
	<u>Story Telling</u>	J. Grey & M. Rugyendo/U	Story-theatre
1972/73	<u>Praising the Sun</u>	M. Jellico/U	Ritual Drama
	<u>The White God's Thunder</u>	R.S.V. Paul/U	Drama
	<u>The Revolution</u>	B. Leshoai/U	Drama
	<u>The Barbed Wire</u>	M. Rugyendo/U	Drama
	<u>Umoja ni Nguvu</u>	P. Muhando/U	Ngonjera
	<u>Kuanza si Kumaliza</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama
	<u>Utunzi na Uongozi</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Dance-drama
1973/74	<u>Oganda's Journey</u>	G. Ogot/U	Drama
	<u>A Place in the Sun</u>	S. Waigwa/U	Drama
	<u>Lumumba</u>	B. Leshoai/U	Drama
1974/75	<u>Walivyokuwa Wamelala</u>	F. Mziray/U	Drama
	<u>Kinjeketile</u>	E.N. Hussein/U	Drama
	<u>Tendehogo</u>	E. Semzaba/U	Drama
1975/76	<u>Sizwe Bansi is Dead</u>	A. Fugard/U	Drama
	<u>The Island</u>	A. Fugard/U	Drama
	<u>Pambo</u>	P. Muhando/U	Drama
	<u>Maiti</u>	F. Mziray/U	Drama
	<u>Tendehogo</u>	E. Semzaba/U	Drama
	<u>Jogoo Kijijini</u>)		
)		
	<u>Ngao ya Jadi</u>)	E.N. Hussein/U	Story-theatre

<u>Year</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>Author/Group</u>	<u>Type</u>
	<u>The Measures Taken</u>	B. Brecht/U	Drama
	<u>Dhamana</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Drama
1976/77	<u>Mabatini</u>	G.Z. Kaduma/U	Drama ⁺
	<u>The Strong Breed</u>	W. Soyinka/U	Drama
1977/78	<u>Mashetani</u>	E.N. Hussein/U	Drama ⁺
	<u>Harakati za Ukombozi</u>	P.O. Mlama <u>et al.</u> *	Dance-Musical Drama
1978/79	<u>Giza Limeingia</u>	E. Mbogo/U	Drama ⁺
	<u>Mabatini</u>	G.Z. Kaduma*	Drama ⁺
	<u>The Trials of Brother Jero</u>	W. Soyinka/U	Drama
	<u>Wazazi Kukitembelea Chuo</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Oganda's Journey</u>	G. Ogot/B	Drama
	<u>Aliyeonja Pepo</u>	F. Topan/B	Drama
	<u>Kisoma Chenye Manufaa</u>	B/B	Drama
1979/80	<u>Chuano</u>	Paukwa*	Recitation
	<u>The Swamp Dwellers</u>	W. Soyinka*	Drama
	<u>Vita Dhidi ya Nduli Iddi Amin</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Historia ya Watanzania Wakati wa Wajerumani</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Serikali Dhidi ya Wezi</u>	B/B	Drama
1980/81	<u>A Season in the Congo</u>	A. Césaire/U	Drama ⁺
	<u>Giza Limeingia</u>	E. Mbogo/U	Drama ⁺
	<u>Sizwe Bansi is Dead</u>	A. Fugard/U	Drama

<u>Year</u>	<u>Production</u>	<u>Author/Group</u>	<u>Type</u>
	<u>Tendehogo</u>	E. Semzaba/U	Drama
	<u>The Burdens</u>	J. Ruganda*	Drama
	<u>Vita Dhidi ya Magendo</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Ukame</u>	K. Gosori/B	Drama
	<u>Radhi ya Baba</u>	B/B	Drama
1981/82	<u>Sokomoko</u>	E.N. Hussein/U	Story-theatre ⁺
	<u>Historia ya TANU</u>	Gahu/U	Story-theatre
	<u>The Island</u>	A. Fugard*	Drama
	<u>Masumbuko na Ndelawasi</u>	B/B	Musical Drama ⁺
	<u>Ushindi Rahisi</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Azenga na Azoto</u>	B/B	Story-theatre ⁺
	<u>Tutashinda</u>	B/B	Drama
	<u>Oganda's Journey</u>	G. Ogot/B	Drama
1982/83	<u>Shing'weng'we</u>	U/U	Story-theatre ⁺ Dance-drama
	<u>Nyoka Kisimani</u>	U/U	Story-theatre ⁺
	<u>Ayubu</u>	Paukwa*	Musical-drama ⁺
	<u>Mfalme Edipode</u>	Euripides/B	Drama
1984	<u>Mapambano na Muungano</u>	B/B	Dance-musical ⁺ Drama

Source: The Department of Art, Music and Theatre, University of Dar-es-Salaam, and Butimba College of National Education.

B = Butimba

U = The University

* Members of staff participated in these as members of groups which incorporate others outside the University

+ These productions were heavily informed with dance, music, mime and/or Brechtian alienation effects.

APPENDIX I

Interview with Penina O. Muhando, an activist in Popular
Theatre for Development, Dar-es-Salaam, September 1984

Q: What is the role of Popular Theatre in Tanzania today?

A: The role of Popular Theatre in Tanzania today is that of bringing about a meaningful participation of the people in their own socio-economic development. Through Popular Theatre, people express their viewpoints, analyse critically the causes of their developmental problems and seek solutions to those problems.

Q: How do you envision the future of Popular Theatre in the country?

A: I see Popular Theatre being the main theatre movement in the future. It will be a stronger movement than the urban commercial slap stick theatre which is purely for entertainment and the blind propaganda-ridden rural theatre which only serves the ruling class. The strength of Popular Theatre will come from the fact that it provides the missing link in the previous communication for development. Although the mass media and political meetings have

been extensively used before, they have always been a one-way communication and have excluded the participation of the masses in discussions and decision making. This has resulted in the creation of otherwise avoidable development problems. Popular Theatre offers a two-way communication process that is crucial to the development process. It is for this reason that Popular Theatre will have to be given prominence.

Q: Does Popular Theatre in Tanzania have any similarities to that practised elsewhere in Africa?

A: Yes, in that there have been other Popular Theatre attempts in such countries as Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Swaziland, Nigeria and Kenya.

But approaches to and processes of Popular Theatre have varied in all these attempts. The uniqueness of the Tanzanian process, when compared to the others, is in the attempt to make the people (the peasants) themselves, rather than theatre specialists, participants in the execution of the Popular Theatre process. The theatre specialists mainly animate and help to sharpen the ideological and artistic interpretation of the process. Also there has been an emphasis on letting the peasants use their own indigenous theatre forms, i.e. dance, story-telling, etc., and a de-emphasis of western conventional drama, which is alien to the

peasants. Popular Theatre in other countries has mainly used theatre specialist groups and drama as the major artistic expression.

Q: What are the problems facing Popular Theatre in Africa and Tanzania specifically?

A: The lack of enough financial and moral support from the powers that be, e.g. the Ministry of Culture in Tanzania.

The lack of enough personnel trained in the Popular Theatre approach to act as catalysts on a wider basis.

The lack of training facilities for Theatre as a whole and Popular Theatre in particular.

The lack of basic facilities, e.g. transport, funds, etc. to run Popular Theatre activities.

APPENDIX JFilm and Theatre Law of 1976

Parts 1 - 4 cover Articles 1-21 on Film.

Part 5

On Supervision of Stage Performances:

22. By his written notice or that which carries his signature or through an announcement in the Government Gazette the Minister can elect any person or group of persons or select any government department or a public institution to be the theatre authority for the purposes of this section of the law to be responsible in one area or more as the Minister sees fit.
23. (1) It is unlawful for anyone to give, or to direct or to allow, or to make or to participate or to assist in producing or giving public theatre performances of any kind except when the theatre authority has given a licence to permit such performances.
- (2) Anyone acting contrary to stipulations in section (1) of this article will have committed an offence.
24. (1) The request for a play licence will be done in writing and forwarded to the authority in the area where the play will be shown and will be forwarded together with one copy of the play,

a copy which the authority can return at once or retain as it sees fit for the whole period in which the licence is valid or for any length of time seen by the authority as necessary to perform its duties well.

(2) If such a play is written in a language which is neither Kiswahili nor English, the authority can request its translation in either Kiswahili or English according to the confirmed wishes of the authority. When the theatre authority sees that a translation is unnecessary, it can delegate a person or persons to see the play or a section of the play in order to evaluate it and give their report.

25. The theatre authority can give a licence to a play or it can give such a licence with a provision that certain sections of the play should be eliminated or changed or it can refuse to grant a licence if it sees that such a play will offend people or disturb peace in the nation or for any other reason in which a public performance is undesirable in the interest of the public.

26. If

(a) a licence has been granted for a play but with the provision that certain sections in the play should be eliminated or changed and then the play is shown without such sections being eliminated or changed; or

(b) in the performance of any play, additions have been made and have not been included in the copy forwarded to the theatre authority according to section (1) of Article 24 of the Law,

Such performances will be counted as not having obtained a licence according to Article 23 of the Law.

27. Without adhering to the guidelines of this part of the Law

(a) The Minister through a notification in the Government Gazette can lift the ban on any play or any other performance which will not close in accordance with this part of the Law by giving a general pardon or by naming the persons or type of persons who are performing or showing a performance or the type of performance pardoned.

(b) Likewise, the theatre authority can grant pardon to a performance or performances which will be shown in their area of jurisdiction.

(my translation)

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