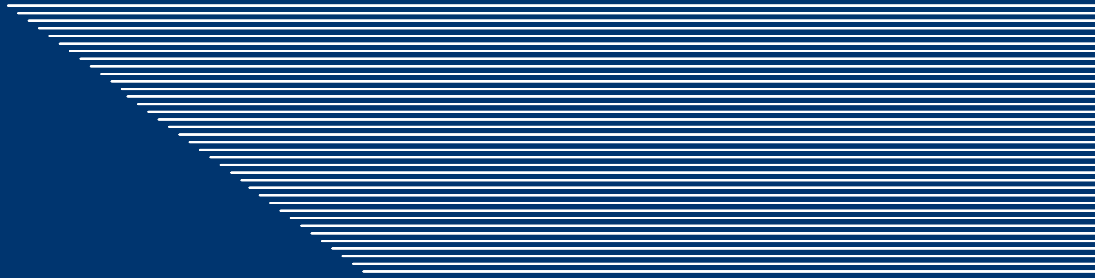


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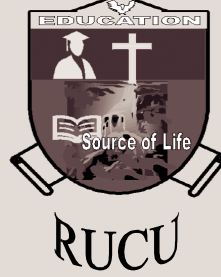
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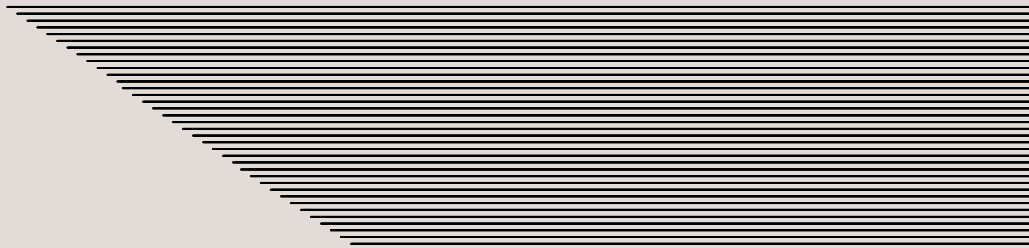
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Editorial Note

The “Ruaha Journal of Arts and Social Sciences” (RUJASS) is a Journal that publishes research papers of academic interest, targeting on academic issues from a multidisciplinary approach and therefore hospitable to scholarly writing on a variety of academic disciplines. RUJASS is an indispensable resource for Arts and Social Sciences researchers.

The aim of RUJASS is to publish research articles, original research reports, reviews, short communications and scientific commentaries in the fields of arts and social sciences such as, anthropology, education, linguistics, political science, sociology, geography, history, psychology, development studies, information and library science.

The journal is dedicated to the advancement of arts and social sciences knowledge and provides a forum for the publication of high quality manuscripts. The journal is published bi-annual and accepts original research, book reviews and short communication.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to accept or reject any manuscript and the right to edit the manuscript as it deems fit. Moreover, manuscripts must be submitted with a covering letter stating that all authors (in case of multiple authors) agree with the

content and approve of its submission to the journal. Research theoretical paper should be between 5000 and 7,000 words in length. Reviews and short communication should not exceed 2000 words. The word count of the manuscript should include, abstract, references, tables and figures. Manuscripts should be in English or Kiswahili.

EDITORS IN CHIEF

Swahili Urban Literature: Discovering New Literary Territories

Graziella Acquaviva

Department of Humanities

University of Turin-Italy

Email: graziella.acquaviva@unito.it

Abstract

An analysis of Swahili popular literature cannot avoid recognising that the study of popular fiction is the serious examination of material widely dismissed as trivial. The very problem of defining the field of study is central and demands the attention of anyone who thinks seriously about non-canonical text. It is not easy to study popular fiction: much resistance persists as do the old prejudices of the mass-culture debate. It is important to re-emphasise the intrusiveness of these prejudices: what is certain is that the Swahili popular writers' voices have broken the silence about many social problems. When treating as a research topic the literature in a language which also embodies the value of a national literature one spontaneously considers the concept of literary territory. The word "territory", used by geographers to designate a variable extension of space occupied by humans organized collectively and governed by laws, when applied to narrative is tied to notions of stability and settlement and, beyond any geographical meaning, embodies abstract values (traditions and beliefs) upon

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which the feeling of belonging to a space is founded. Through focusing on some selected Swahili popular novels and short stories, I will investigate how it is possible to draw a picture of the space in terms of social, political cultural and symbolic contexts.

Key words: Fasihi pendwa, Urban space, Identity, Symbolism, Tanzania

Introduction

Scholars distinguish two literary currents in Tanzania: popular literature or *fasihi pendwa* and academic literature or *fasihi-dhati* (Mlacha&Madumulla, 1991; Gromov, 2008:5; Lindfors, 1991; Palmer, 1978). On one side are the intellectuals like E. Kezilahabi, E. Hussein, M. Mulokozi who are socially and politically committed and concerned to the quality of their works; on the other side are the popular writers like K. Mukajanga, B. Mtobwa, N. Mbajo, whose books are sold in bookshops or in the streets (Bertoncini Zúbková et al., 2009:2-4).

According to Cancel (1993: 301) the audience for popular writing grew so quickly that we can consider it a causal element in the rapid growth of literacy in Tanzania: the reader preferences have shifted from tale and romance to the realistic novel and short stories. Already at the start of the Eighties, the Swahili popular writer did not tell the readers the events but the way in which the characters

lived those events.

In my study of Swahili popular literature published in the Eighties and in the Nineties of the last century, I concentrated on four fundamental points:

- The way in which Tanzanian literary production took into consideration territory as physical space: the majority of the stories take place in an urban context;
- The aesthetics of representations;
- The symbolic context;
- Identifying and ideological functions.

Methodologically, my first step is to consider the text as a place where the reader encounters models, figures, collective imaginary myths created, transformed and confirmed by the literary work: the aesthetics of the graphic representation and the communicative functions coincide. As far as the symbolic context is concerned, it is important to realise that even though it is not easy to say what the symbol is, nowadays we encounter a progressive rediscovery of the centrality of “the symbolic” understood as hermeneutical value and force. For its thematics, the Swahili urban novel represents a symbol of change and precariousness. These last elements have accompanied the growth and formation of the new generations of readers, the new city dwellers.

Urban Literature: Features and Challenges

If it is true that emotional language has proved to be a powerful instrument to access one's own and other's knowledge, to express complex experiences like those connected to pain and anguish, or rather of suffering and to differentiate between the diverse psychological conditions, it became necessary to reflect on the mechanism of embodiment, a notion from which it is possible to recognise different and, at the same time, coexistent bodies in the literary work: the individual body and related to the Self; the social and the political body (Scheper-Hughes &Lock, 1987).

In fact, the passage from a pre-colonial communal traditional lifestyle that allowed the individual to live safely within his own group, to a modern urban lifestyle has entailed a transformation of ways of life and being. Such a situation has given rise to strong tensions between behaviour and ideology and created a weight of anguish that characterises the nature of an evermore interiorly isolated individual. Society becomes a figure external to the individual, the emotional esclusion from which to evade through the invention of stories and so find his own identity as happens, for example, in *Sokoni Kariakoo* ('Kariakoo Market Place') by B. Katama published by Heko publishing house in 1996 in a series called Tamtamu Club and printed in an economical pocket-sized format (Acquaviva, 2005: 7-10). Katama points out the foreign status of Zakayo, a young boy from a rural village of Iringa region

when he arrives in Kariakoo - the main commercial area of Dar es-Salaam, known as a place of informal commercial activities - looking for a brother of his who had migrated in search of work. Zakayo himself feels like a stranger in his own country. He feels dazed in all that chaos of people and damaged goods that are peculiar to the Kariakoo market place.

The stories of urban literary production are set in a real space minutely described by the narrators and topographically recognisable. Each description, introduced into the story through dialogues, the points of view or the action of the characters, realise a series of situations that go from indicating the formal and structural aspects of the object to those aspects that define the situation of the object in space through the assimilation of other elements such as comparisons and metaphors. The urban setting is the place where the social changes come true.

The city has long represented freedom in contrast to the rigid codes and customs of rural communities. The public spaces of the city are potentially sites of difference where diverse “embodied subjectivities” encounter one another, but the city can just as easily be a site of segregation and exclusion, where difference and freedom are controller or curtailed on the basis of gender, sexuality, race, class, disability, and so on (Davies&Gannon, 2006). If it is true that popular culture plays an important role in constituting and

representing the public to itself, some publications are an example of public awareness related to those social problems linked to urban features of poverty, crime and drugs.

Symbols of urban perdition like sex and drugs are intertwined with the representation of Woman as in *Marehemu Susana* by J.R.R. Mkabarah published in 1985; a mystery story that sees the detective Seki involved in the investigation of the murder of Susana, a young woman with a loose life.

[...] *Baadaye kidogo kicheko cha ghafula kikasikika kutoka kwa Seki.*

*'Alikuwa na maisha ya hatari sana marehemu Susana'
'Vipi?'*, Beneza aliuliza shingo yake ikichuchumia kutazama ndani ya mkoba ulioshikiliwa na Seki. Seki hakujibu, badala yake akamsogeza kwa Beneza mkoba huo gharadi ya kumwonyesha kilichokuwamo ndani (...)

'Ni nini?'

'Bangi!'

(...) *Mungu wangu! Kwa nini msichana huyu alikuwa na maisha mabaya jinsi hii! Ni nani aliyemfundisha kuvuta bangi?*

'Mtu kama Susana si mtu wa kufunzwa kitu na mtu'

[...]

'Na wala si yeye tu mvuta bangi na mnywa gongo na vidonge vya kulevya (...)

Wasichana kama Monika Tuni, Thecla na Diana, husemwa kwamba ni mvuta bangi na walevi wa pombe mbaya[...](Mkabarah, 1985:73-74).

[...] After a while they heard the sudden laugh of Seki.

'Poor Susana led a loose life'

'What've you got?', asked Beneza loosening his shirt collar and peeping into the bag that Seki was holding. Instead of replying Seki

held out the bag to Beneza as if to show him the contents...
'What is it?'
'Marijuana!'...
(...) My God why would she lead such a life? Who could've started her on joints...?
'Someone like Susana doesn't need anybody to teach her...'
'She's not the only drug addict and alcoholic (...) Girls like Monika, Tuni, Thecla and Diana, were called joint smokers and spirit drinkers [...].

The city has a self-referential urban language: *lugha ya mitaani* ('street language') or *Kibongo* ('language of Bongo') (Reuster-Jahn&Kießling, 2006: 3-4). Dar es-Salaam is known as 'Bongo' in Swahili slang expression which translates to 'brains', meaning the place where one needs 'bongo' to survive. According to Kurtz (1998: 85), the chaos that constitutes Dar es-Salaam is a source of fear and danger and the city becomes a symbol of the threats to society.

In fact, drug trafficking, the social problem displayed in *Marehemu Susana*, was a very new phenomenon in the lives of Tanzanians in the 1990's. To most people in Tanzania, drugs ('madawa ya kulevya') were a problem of developed countries. The business itself was beyond the comprehension of an ordinary Tanzanian. The city of Dar es-Salaam, like many other African commercial centres was being used as a transit point by large drug cartels on transit routes for drugs that were destined to European and American towns (Acquaviva, 1997: 42-43). In Tanzania, the slang name used for drug dealers is "wazungu wa unga" ('white people with flour').

The informal routes for illegal trafficking are called 'panya' ('mouse'), the countries involved in drug trafficking have metaphorical name 'shamba' in Kiswahili, meaning 'farm'.

The slang terms used for drugs are: *ice* ('crack-cocaine'), *unga* ('heroin'), *msokoto*, *ganji*, *sigara kubwa*, for the ones smoked like cigars, *bangi* ('bhang'). The latter is grown in some places in Tanzania, such as Mbeya and Iringa where it is consumed as a vegetable. In Shinyanga and Tabora regions, cannabis is grown and used as a stimulant to enable a person to work longer hours in the farm (Possi, 1996: 115-116).

Female Dimension in Urban and Literary Context

Throughout the twenty years following independence (1961), literature written in Swahili and published in Tanzania sustained the national politics of the new government, but from the 1980's onward there is change in literary expression. From being just a political instrument, literature begins to take its first steps towards new fields: the text becomes a place of experience. Criticism, especially western criticism, is not indifferent to such a change in tendency. Marxist and sociological approaches, or those based on the classic aesthetics of the text, are accompanied by a new interpretative perspective, namely, the psychoanalytical approach which - in my opinion - is still nowadays a precious hermeneutical instrument allowing us to study the interior processes that are at the basis of every artistic expression.

Travelling through literary works I have come to the hypothesis of symbolic figures, interpretable in relation to social processes: I have considered the symbolic dimension of Woman in the light of the historical past and more recent social events. The reproductive role of Woman has always been seen as the basis for all social practices and rural economy, so much so that a Marxist anthropologist like Meillassoux (1975) defined Woman as the reproducer of the producers; and it is in the female figure that the greatest part of the contradictions in African society are reflected.

The microcosm inserted in the text reflects the stratified and fluctuating macrocosm of reality of which it becomes the reading. The description of space assumes a great importance, becoming a narrative instrument through which the authors bring to the surface perceptions of collective tensions converging and often joining those that the sociologists define social problems.

The representation of the city, conceived as an economic space is a male dominion, as is also the city conceived as a real space, to which the female dimension has access only in an episodic and accidental way (Little, 1973: 12). In fact, the relationship between Women and the City has always existed even though the most visible contacts were those between the figure of the prostitute and the street where she offered herself.

In the 1990's popular novels describe urban realities that up to then had never been explicitly touched upon, like for example infant prostitution: as in the novel *Dar-es-salaam Usiku* ('Dar es Salaam by Night') by Ben. R. Mtobwa, published in 1990 and where we find the character of Rukia, a child prostitute.

[...] *Tatizo kubwa lilikuwa umri. Ndiyo kila mwanamume anapenda sana kuwa na msichana kinda. Lakini si kinda kama kile (...) Wateja wa mama yake walipokuja kumtafuta na kumkuta yeye walimtazama kwa tamaa (...) Wakaondoka zao huku wakimeza mate (...) Hawakuwa na habari kuwa mtoto huyu alikuwa tayari kwa lo lote na cho chote [...]* (Mtobwa, 1990: 2-3).

[...] The serious problem was age. Of course every man loves to be with young girls, but not as young as her...When her mother's clients came looking for her and found the girl instead, they looked at her with longing...they went away swallowing...they didn't in the least imagine that the child had already been trained to satisfy each and every one of their desires [...].

For Woman the city becomes a labyrinth, i.e., an intricate path towards a centre and a place where trials are faced. The labyrinth is a net, a game, a dance, a backwards and forwards, blind alleys and forks, an iniziatic path of death and rebirth. This is the place tied to Woman by images of moral corruption and physical danger, as we can read once more in *Dar es Salaam Usiku*:

[...] *Halafu ikaja ile siku ambayo alichelewa kurudi nyumbani. Njiani alikutana na vijana wawili walevi. Walimtia mweseleka na kumfanya “kama mama”. Kwa zamu [...]* (Mtobwa, 1990: 3)

[...] and there came the day when she was late coming home. On the road she met two drunken young men. They made her go down on all fours and treated her ‘as her mother was’. They took turns [...].

And as Yakisola tells in the novel *Mariana*, published in 1987:

[...] *Kama nilivyotaraja, nikaambiwa nitoe nguo zote. Sikuweza kubisha, nikazitoa, nitabaki uchi! Amri iliyofuata ilinitaka niiname (...)* Nilipoanza kupatwa na fahamu, ilikuwa ni asubuhi watu wakiwa wamenizunguka. Nilipotaka kunyanyuka nilijisikia maumivu makali ajabu, hasa huko kulikokuwa kumekatwa nyama ikining’inia. Nilijiona sina thamani kamwe, hata inzi walinizomea [...]

 (Yakisola, 1987: 25).

[...] As I feared , they told me to undress. I couldn’t rebel, I took off my clothes and stood naked. I was ordered to bend over (...) When I came to, it was dawn and there were people around me. I tried to move and felt terrible pain, especially there, where the flesh had been torn during penetration. I felt annulled, even the flies buzzed around me [...]

When women start to think of the city as a place in which to create relationships through cognitive and affective means, the urban reality arises as a place of action. Historically, women in Tanzania played an active role in the fight for freedom: in 1959 they achieved the right to vote, and thanks to their support the TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) led by J. K Nyerere rose to power and won independence for the country in 1961. In one of the first

independent governments, a woman, Bi Titi Mohammed, was nominated minister and created the women's association UWT (Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanganyika) which by that time was an integral part of the national scene (Lal. 2015: 102). In 1962, women from every area of Tanganyika met in Dar es Salaam on the occasion of the Congress of the All Women's Conference. The *Amendment to the Affiliation Act* belongs to this period, the first law that allowed women to claim recognition by fathers for children born out of wedlock. In 1971, the *Law of Marriage Act* gave them greater security through the legal registration of marriage and divorce, regulating both the minimum age for marriage (15 years old for women and 18 years old for men) and giving them the right to declare their intentions at wedding, and both for monogamous and polygamous marriages. In 1975, the *Maternity Law Amendment Act* made another step forward in women's lives, giving maternity benefits to all regardless of marital status (Swantz, 1985:20). Still, after a few years from the independence, the 1980's saw Tanzania forced to give up to the offers of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. That meant once again accepting the presence of the West on the territory, so that the new generation of city dwellers had to meet and confront new cultural models. The urban context is the place where meetings between men and women occur most often and it is here that the latter have developed the tendency to prefer a sentimental relationship rather than marriage.

A study conducted by Obbo (1987) at the end of the 1980's showed that for some women relationships with rich men represented a way to be granted economic security. The city is, on one side, a place where sexual liberality prevails and men obtain access to attractive women through cash; on the other side, it becomes a place that offers the possibility of aggregation, independence, and of opportunities outside the limits of the home (Lewinson, 2006: 99).

A woman who has given herself the choice to show her masculine side as can be understood by the words of Maua, the protagonist of the novel *Pesa ZakoZinanuka* ('Your Money Stinks') by Ben R. Mtobwa and published in 1986.

[...] *Sisi huwaweka wanaume wote katika mafungu matatu. Fungo la kwanza ni la wale wanaume ambao tunawapenda kwa dhiti. Wanaume ambao uko tayari kuishi kwa kheri au shari. Kundi la pili ni la wanaume wazuri wa sura na umbo. Kundi hilo tunalipenda sana kwa ajili ya kujionyesha tu mbele ya wenzetu (...) kundi la tatu ni la akina Bon. Watu wabaya au wazee, Tunawafuata kwa ajili ya uzito wa mifuko yao [...]*(Mtobwa, 1986: 26-27).

[...] We put all men into three categories. The first is for the men we love. Men with whom you are prepared to live with in harmony. In the second, we put the handsome men you like to show to your friends..... The third is the one of Bon Magnaccia or old men that we follow for the weight of their wallets [...].

The city-dwelling woman appears transfigured: neither mother nor wife, a hybrid that in the imagination of an author such as Mtobwa symbolically assumes the aspect of a trans in *Dar es Salaam Usiku*.

[...] Na kwa wavulana ni “*Lover Boy*” ambaye alionekana kuyateka macho ya watazamaji. Kama asingekuwa mwanamume (...) Alikuwa mmoja kati ya wale vijana wachache waliobahatika kupewasura nzuri za kike. Hata umbile lake pia halikutofautiana sana na mwanamke. Mwili wake ulikuwa laini, matako makubwa na macho yaliyolegea. Ndevu change ambazo zilianza kujitokeza hapo kidevuni ndiyo kasoro pekee. Iliyotia doa katika sura yake pana yenye haya (...) *Lover Boy* (...)Angependa sana kuwa mwanamke [...] (Mtobwa, 1990: 15-16).

[...] For the boys it’s the *Lover Boy* that seems to attract the looks of the spectators (...) He was one of the few young men lucky to appear feminine. The forms of his body were comparable to those of a woman. Soft curves and ample buttocks that could not pass unnoticed. An imperceptible down barely covered his chin. It was the only masculine sign in his appearance (...) *Lover Boy* (...) he wished he was a woman [...].

Androgeny is not new to African culture and has its roots in cosmogony (the representations of Dogon and Sudanese deities are an example), but homosexuality in literature becomes a symbol of social degradation used as a prototype for a transgression capable of inverting the categories of order and disorder and deeply attacking the principles of identity and the limits of conscience (Gatto-Trocchi, 1995). From the novels an urban and permissive sexuality emerges: one emphasises the commercial and instrumental character of the ample sexual exchanges, the other points to the past and the impact of reminiscence on values and on current behaviour.

The Images' Language

The emergence of the social, as a figure in the text, is brought to us once again by the analytical structure that takes the literary imagery as a structure of social metaphores and if, as it seems, the thoughts of an isolated individual arise from the structure of a society that forces one to give up the realisation of one's instincts, then individuals would be accustomed to transform a great deal of desires and instinctual manifestations into private and secret fantasies, hidden from the external world or confined to the recesses of the unconscious. A form of this return to these kinds of instincts is the path followed through dream forms. The interpretation of dreams is the bridge between day and night, creating a new viewpoint that is halfway between light and dark and includes both internal and external life. Concerning this topic, I have extrapolated from parts of the novel *Mpenzi I-II* ('Darling') by K. D. Mukajanga, published between 1984-1985, some narrative sequences based on dreams as a form of reversion by similarity, which allow me to bring the described phenomenon to their imaginary background:

[...] aliota ndoto. Aliota yuko nyumbani (...) Walikuwa wamekaa kwenye sebule ndogo ya nyumbani kwao, nae Shangwe alikuwa kakalishwa katikati, kazungukwa na kaka zake, mama yake na baba yake. Baba yake kavalia kabuti lake nzito, ambalo, kila jioni ya siku aliyokuwa kazini alivaa (...) "Shangwe, elewa leo nakuchinja" alihema baba mtu. " Hiyo mimba leo itakutokea puani. Utajuta kuzaliwa (...) Shangwe alishtuka toka usingizini alipopiga ukulele wa hofu [...](Mukajanga, 1985: 50-51).

[...] she dreamt. She dreamt he was home (...) they were seated in the small living room of their home and Shangwe had been made to sit in the centre, surrounded by his brothers, and by his parents. His father was wearing his heavy coat that he wore every evening to go to work, 'Shangwe, see this evening I'll cut your throat' yelled his father (...) 'This foetus will come out of your nose today. You'll be sorry you were born (...) ' Shangwe woke suddenly screaming with fright [...].

According to Hillman (1995), reversion is a method that connects the psychic process to its myth, and this method forces us to observe that which has really been dreamt, has really been felt. In the dream Shangwe relives the fear that she has been suffering from for a long time: the refusal of the child she is carrying. The fear of the future and insecurity are symbolized by the figure of her father, Mzee Potee, who, armed with a knife, has no doubts about how to solve the problem. The sense of anguish and suffocation is amplified by the surroundings where the actions will take place: a closed room.

Idyllic projections are the images that emerge from Tatu's dream:

*[...] Akaanza kumwota usiku! Huota yuko nae, wakitembea barabarani, wameshikana mikono, wakicheka kwa furaha (...)
Huota wako wote bustanini, wamekaa wakibarizi, mara wakibembea (...)
Tena watuliapo, yule kijana kashika kinanda, anapiga ule wimbo usiombanduka, "Kifo cha Mahaba" [...]*
(Mukajanga, 1985: 98).

[...] She started to dream about him at night! She always dreamt she was with him, walking in the streets, holding hands and smiling happily. (...) She dreamt they were in a garden, sitting next to

eachother (...) Then they were looking into eachother's eyes and he taking up the guitar plays that unforgettable song called ' death of love'[...].

The open space and the joy of being with the man she desires disappear on the notes of 'Death of Love' which will be the premonitory sign of the death the girl will really suffer when she tries to save Angel, the man she loves. Shangwe and Tatu are both daughters of the independence. What pushes the young people is the strength of youth, the enthusiasm perceived as an increase in energy levels. But while in Tatu this is represented by the power of love, by the sublimation of the feeling until death, in Shangwe it is symbolised by hate towards men. Tatu and Shangwe are the incarnation of the new Tanzanian generation with the confusion of young people in whose souls the fatigue and delusions of their fathers are projected following the idealistic crisis caused by the decline of the Ujamaa politics.

Sensations and emotions have appeared several times during this journey between symbols and reality, but what is most interesting now is the handling of emotions in the expressive language of collective imagery. A strong emotion like fear, if woven into a metroplitan context, becomes a resource for the emotional involvement of the reader. The form of the novel tends to offer external and internal landscapes passing through the stream of consciousness and telling the change of the image of self.

In *Mizimu ya Bongo* ('Bongo's devils') by A. K. Kizua, published in 1992, the writer lays the structural and semantic characteristics of his narrative in a paraxial position. At the beginning of his tale his means of establishing reality are mimetic:

[...] Ilikuwa ni AIR BUS ya Shirika la Ndege za KLM ambayo ilitubeba pale Amsterdam[...] (Kizua, 1992: 5)

[...] It was a KLM Airbus that took us to Amsterdam [...]

But then they move towards a different genre that represents apparent impossibilities:

[...] Hata kabla sijafika nusu ya safari hiyo mambo kadhaa yalitokea (...) Nilikuwa nimemwacha aendeleo kunitazama wakati wake. Kwanzia pale kwenye miguu yangu mipana ambayo vidole vyake vimekaa bila ya mpangilio maalum. Liledole gumba lilikuwa fupi sana, tena lilikuwa nene kuliko ambavyo wewe unaweza kufikiria (...) Ukipenda waweza tu, kuniita mimi Bwana mwenye mikono minne au simba [...](Kizua, 1992: 45, 53-54).

[...] I wasn't even half way through the journey when things started to happen (...) I let him look at me as long as he wanted. At first the feet started to change and the toes to become so large that there was no space between one and the other. The big toe became enormous and shorter than you could imagine (...) If you wish you can also call me the lord of the four paws or lion [...].

The 'Bwana simba' element, in the Swahili cultural context assumes an uncanny significance connected to the animistic gender of perception that challenges the principle of reality is common to other Swahili works published in the 1970's, like *Mbojo: Simba Mtu* (' Mbojo: The Lion-Man') by N. J. Kuboja, where the author tells how the Nyaturu witch doctors transformed their victims, making them similar to lions both in their appearance and behaviour and again, in the poem "Hadithi ya Kitoto" ('A children's tale') from the collection *Kichomi* by Euphrase Kezilahabi (1974), which represents the remorse befalling Kanana for having killed his adulterous son through the figure of the orch, a typical element of the oral tradition that in some African populations belongs to different entities that populate the spiritual world (Parrinder, 1974).

In *Mizimu ya Bongo* the physical description of the protagonist-narrator leads to meanings of supernatural powers: the physical resemblance to the lion, symbol of power, tied to his human nature makes the man a figure alien to his world. The otherness is written into the social values of the text in a hidden way, because it is intimate, but also revealed by words:

[...] *kwa kitambo kirefu sasa, tokea pale nilipopata hisia ya kurudi nyumbani (...) hususan, miaka kumi si kitu cha mchezo! (...) Mambo mengi yamenikuta. Nimeelewa na kujifunza mengi kuhusu ubinadamu wenyewe [...]* (Kizua, 1992: 5-6).

[...] a long time has passed since then, since i felt the urge to return

home...let's say that ten years are something...many things have happened to me. I've understood and learnt many things about humanity itself [...].

Those that I reported are just a few examples through which it is possible to note how literary figures and models become symbolic structures of social imaginary in a process that induces the readers to spend their emotional creativity in producing new relationships with time and space and new images.

Conclusions

After the economic crisis of the 1980's the city has attracted more and more young people looking for jobs within a submersed economic market that provides them an apparent, immediate well-being. I have shown that writing has followed the process of the city's growth: the more it becomes a metropolis, the more the writing requires images and themes regarding all types of antisocial acts arising from the relationship between the individual and power, from the conditions of people whose lives struggle in a social-territorial context, autochthonous and at the same time alien.

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